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THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

Oliver Goldsmith, M. B.

A NEW EDITION, IN SIX VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED, SOME

ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOLUME I.

NEW-YORK:

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THE

LIFE

OF

Dr. Oliver Goldsmith.

'THE life of a scholar,' our author observes, in the account prefixed to the works of Parnell, 'seldom abounds with adventures. His fame is acquired in solitude. And the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions, by which he is scarcely distinguished from the rest of mankind.'—This is indeed true with respect to the generality of writers, whose lives, marked with few incidents, and those of an uninteresting nature, are passed in study, and too frequently in obscurity. Very different indeed was the fate of Dr. Goldsmith, the events of whose life were various and chequered, and whose memoirs are replete with curious and entertaining matter.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH was born on the twenty-ninth day of November, 1728, at a place called Pallas, in the parish of Forney and county of Longford in Ireland. His father, the rev. Charles Goldsmith, a native of the county of Roscommon, was a cler-

gyman of the established church, and had been educated at Dublin college. Though he afterwards obtained the living of Kilkenny West, in the county of Westmeath, yet before he had acquired any preferment, he married Anne, daughter of the rev. Oliver Jones, master of the diocesan school of Elphin.* Her mother's brother, the rev. Mr. Green, at that time rector of Kilkenny West, lent the young couple the house in which our poet was born; and at his death the rev. Charles Goldsmith succeeded him in his benefice.

It was a tradition in our poet's family, that they were descended from a Spanish gentleman named Juan Romeiro, who had sometime in the sixteenth century come into Ireland, with a Spanish nobleman; to whom, with modern ideas, they supposed him to have been tutor or guardian; and that settling in Ireland, from a marriage with a wife of the name of Goldsmith, his descendants assumed her English name.

Although Oliver had evidently his christian name from his mother's father, yet he used to assert, that it had been introduced into her family by some affinity or connexion with that of the protector Oliver Cromwell; he also claimed kindred to that of general Wolf.

Of our poet's early life and character, and of some remarkable adventures at school and at college, we have a curious account by his eldest sister Catharine, wife of Daniel Hodson, esq.; which, in some measure corrected and abridged, we shall present to the reader.

* Communicated by the right rev. Dr. Law, bishop of Elphin.

" The rev. Charles Goldsmith is allowed, by all that knew him, to have been faithfully represented by his son, in the character of the Village Preacher in his poem. He had seven children, *viz.* five sons, and two daughters. Of his eldest son, the rev. Henry Goldsmith, to whom his brother dedicated his Traveller, their father had formed the most sanguine hopes, as he had distinguished himself both at school and at college, but he unfortunately married at the early age of nineteen; which confined him to a curacy, and prevented his rising to preferment in the church.

" Oliver was his second son, and born very unexpectedly after an interval of seven years from the birth of the former child; and the liberal education which their father was then bestowing on his eldest son bearing hard upon his small income, he could only propose to bring up Oliver to some mercantile employment.

" With this view he was instructed in reading, writing, and arithmetic, by a schoolmaster in his father's village, who had been a quarter-master in the army in queen Anne's wars, in the detachment which was sent to Spain: having travelled over a considerable part of Europe, and being of a very romantic turn, he used to entertain Oliver with his adventures; and the impressions these made on his scholar were believed by the family to have given him that wandering and unsettled turn which so much appeared in his future life.

" Oliver, however, was from his earliest infancy very different from other children, subject to particular humors, for the most part uncommonly serious and reserved; but when in gay spirits, none

ever so agreeable as he;* and he began at so early a period to shew signs of genius that he quickly engaged the notice of all the friends of the family, many of whom were in the church. At the age of seven or eight he discovered a natural turn for rhyming, and often amused his father and his friends with early poetical attempts. When he could scarcely write legibly, he was always scribbling verses, which he burnt as he wrote them.

"Observing his fondness for books and learning, his mother, with whom he was always a favorite, pleaded with his father to give him a liberal education: but his own narrow income, the expense attending the educating of his eldest son, and his numerous family, were strong objections. Oliver, in the mean time, was placed under the rev. Mr. Griffin, then schoolmaster of Elphin, and was received into the house of his father's brother, John Goldsmith, esq. at Ballyoughter, near that town, who, with his family, considered him as a prodigy for his age, and have handed down the following instance of his early wit.

"A large company of young people, of both sexes, were assembled one evening at his uncle's, and Oli-

* Mrs. Hodson has, in this slight sketch, probably without knowing it, portrayed every feature of the little Edwin in Beattie's celebrated poem of the Minstrel:

> ————He was no vulgar boy;
> Deep thought oft seem'd to fix his infant eye;
> Dainties he heeded not, nor gaud, nor toy,
> Save one short pipe of rudest minstrelsie.
> Silent when glad, affectionate yet shy,
> And now his look was most demurely sad,
> And now he laugh'd aloud, yet knew not why.

ver, then but nine years old, was required to dance a hornpipe, a youth playing to them at the same time on the fiddle. Being but newly recovered from the small pox, by which he was much disfigured, and his figure being short and thick, the musician, very archly as he supposed, compared him to Æsop dancing; and still harping on this idea, which he conceived to be very bright, our conceited gentleman had suddenly the laugh turned against him, by Oliver's stopping short in the dance with this retort:—

> Our herald hath proclaim'd this saying,
> See Æsop dancing, and his monkey playing.

"This smart reply decided his fortune; for from that time it was determined to send him to the university, and some of the relations, who were respectable clergymen, kindly offered to contribute towards the expense, particularly the rev. Thomas Contarine, who had married Oliver's aunt, a gentlewoman of distinguished learning and good preferment. *

"With this view he was removed to the school of Athlone, about five miles from his father's house, and was for about two years there, under the rev. Mr. Campbel, who had the character of being an ingenious master; but he being obliged to resign the school for want of health, Oliver was sent to the rev. Patrick Hughes, at Edgeworthstown, in the county of Longford, where he was fitted for the University. †

* The rev. Mr. Greene also liberally assisted, as Dr. Goldsmith used to relate, in this beneficent purpose.

† From the last master he profited more than from either of the

"In his last journey to this school, he had an adventure which is thought to have suggested the plot of his Comedy, 'The Mistakes of a Night.'

"Some friend had given him a guinea; and in his way to Edgeworthstown, which is about twenty miles from his father's house, he had diverted himself the whole day by viewing the gentlemen's seats on the road, until, at the fall of night, he found himself in a small town, named Ardagh. Here he inquired for the best house in the place; meaning an inn; but being understood too literally, he was shown to the house of a private gentleman, where calling for somebody to take his horse, and lead him to the stable, he alighted and was shown into the parlour, being supposed to be a guest come to visit the master, whom he found sitting by a good fire. This gentleman immediately discovered Oliver's mistake; and being a man of humour, and also learning from him the name of his father, who happened to be his acquaintance, he encouraged his deception. Oliver accordingly called about him, ordered a good supper, and generously invited the master, his wife and daughters, to partake of it: treated them with a bottle or two of wine, and at going to bed, ordered a hot cake to be prepared for his breakfast: nor was it till at his departure, when he called for the bill, that he found he had been hospitably entertained in a private family.

"In the June following, 1744, Oliver was sent to Dublin college, and entered under the rev. Mr. Wilder, one of the fellows, to whom, as he was

others, as he conversed with him on a footing very different from that of master and scholar. This circumstance Dr. Goldsmith always mentioned with respect and gratitude.

the son of a neighbouring gentleman, the young pupil was particularly recommended. But he was a man of harsh temper and violent passions, and Oliver no less thoughtless and unguarded; so that they very soon disagreed. Oliver formed some acquaintance in the city of Dublin, and was indiscreet enough to invite company of both sexes to partake of a supper and dance in his rooms. This circumstance, unfortunately for our poet, came to the ears of his tutor, who abruptly entered in the midst of all their gaiety, which he soon extinguished; for he not only proceeded to the highest excess of personal abuse, but concluded with manual chastisement before all the company.

"The disgrace attending this cruel treatment drove the poor lad into despair, and he determined never more to see any of his friends, but to remove to some other country, where, totally unknown, he might seek his fortune. He accordingly disposed of his books and clothes, and left the college, but loitered about in Dublin till he had only a shilling left in his pocket, when he set out on his travels. His intention was to go on shipboard at Cork, for some other country, he knew not whither.

"On this shilling he supported himself, as he affirmed, for three days; and then parting by degrees with the clothes off his back, was reduced to such extremity of famine, that, after fasting twenty-four hours, he thought a handful of grey peas, given him by a girl at a wake, the most comfortable repast he ever made. By this time he began to be sensible of his folly, and, like the prodigal son, desirous of returning to his indulgent father. From his father's house he now was not so distant but

that he contrived to send to his brother, who came to him, clothed and carried him back to college, where he effected something of a reconciliation with his tutor, but, as may easily be imagined, they were never afterwards on cordial terms.

"Soon after this event his worthy father died, of whom he gives an account in the Citizen of the World, under the character of the man in black. His good uncle Contarine endeavoured to supply his loss, and wished him to prepare for holy orders. But for the clerical profession he had no liking, having always a strong inclination for visiting foreign countries; and when he did apply to the bishop he was rejected because he was too young.* His uncle however procured him the office of private tutor in the family of a neighbouring gentleman, where he continued about a year: but being averse to the necessary confinement, he quitted his friends, and having saved about thirty pounds, and procured a good horse, he left the country.

"His friends, after an absence of six weeks, without having heard what had become of him, concluded he had quitted the kingdom; when he suddenly returned to his mother's house without a penny, upon a poor little horse not worth twenty shillings, which he called Fiddle-back. His mother, as might be expected, was highly offended, but his brothers and sisters had contrived to meet him there, and at length effected a reconciliation.

"Being required to account for the loss of his

* The tradition in the diocese of Elphin is, that he was rejected by bishop Synge, to whom he offered himself a candidate, either because he had neglected the professional studies, or from a (perhaps exaggerated) report of irregularities at college.

money and linen, and the horse on which he had departed, he told them that he had been at Cork, where he had sold his horse, and paid for his passage for America, to a captain of a ship. But the winds proving contrary for three weeks, he had amused himself by seeing every thing curious in and about that city, and on the day the wind proved fair, being engaged with a party in an excursion into the country, his friend, the captain, had set sail without him. He continued in Cork till he had only two guineas left, out of which he paid forty shillings for Fiddle-back; and when he wished to return home, he had only the remaining crown* in his pocket. Although this was rather too little for a journey of a hundred and twenty miles, he had intended to visit on the road, not far from Cork, a dear friend he had known in college, who had often pressed him to spend a summer at his house, and on whose assistance he depended for supplies. In this expectation he had given half his little stock to a poor woman in his way, who had solicited relief for herself and eight children, their father having been seized for rent and thrown into jail.

"He found his friend just recovering from a severe illness; who received him in his cap and slippers, but expressed the greatest joy to see him, and eagerly inquired what agreable occasion had so happily brought him into that country. Oliver, delighted to think his distresses were now at an end, concealed no part of them from his host: to gratify his fine feelings and to excite his sympathy, he represented in the strongest terms not only his pre-

* Two guineas in Irish currency is 2l. 5s. 6d.

sent destitute condition, but the little prospect he had of returning home, on account of having so highly disobliged his family, and observed, that it must be a work of time and of long intercession, before he could again expect to be received into favor. The melancholy silence with which his affecting tale was heard he attributed to the tenderest compassion; and the frequent sighs of his friend, as he walked about rubbing his hands, and deeply lost in thought, consoled him under the dismal recital. The uncommon length of his friend's silence enabled him to renew the subject, and to expatiate on his hopeless situation, till it was at length terminated by his host's observing very drily, how inconvenient it was for him to receive company in his present state of weakness; that he had no provision in the house for a healthy person; he had nothing but slops and milk diet for himself; of which, if he pleased, Mr. Goldsmith might partake; but he feared it would not soon be got ready. This was dismal news to our hungry traveller, who, alas! had fasted the whole day, and it was not till six o'clock, when an old woman appeared and spread the table, on which she laid a small bowl of sago for her master, and a porringer of sour milk, with a piece of brown bread, for his guest. This being soon dispatched, the invalid pleaded the necessity of going early to bed, and left poor Oliver to his own meditations.

"In the morning, consulting with his friend on his unfortunate situation, he advised him to hasten home without loss of time, as his family must be highly offended at his absence. On this Oliver ventured to solicit the loan of a guinea for the support

of himself and his horse on the road. Here again his host gravely advised him against running in debt, and urged that his own illness had deprived him of all his cash. But, my dear friend, said he, you may sell your horse for money sufficient to bear your charges, and I will furnish you with another for the journey. When Oliver desired him to produce this steed, he drew from under a bed an oaken staff; at which the poor youth was so provoked, that he was going to apply it to his pate, when a loud knocking at the gate gave notice of the approach of a visitant. This was a neighbouring gentleman of a very engaging aspect; to whom, as if nothing had happened, our traveller was presented as the very ingenious young friend who had been mentioned to him with such high encomiums while they were at college.

"The visit concluded with an invitation of the two friends to dine at that gentleman's house on the morrow. To this Oliver at first reluctantly consented, but as he really stood in want of a dinner, at length he went, and was highly pleased with the entertainment. In the evening, when they were about to return, their host, who had observed some glances which shewed all was not right between the two fellow-collegians, insisted that Mr. Goldsmith should stay and spend some days at his house; who at parting desired the other would take care of the horse he had so kindly offered him, and not surfeit his friends with their milk diet. To this our gentleman only replied with a sneer, and left Oliver to tell all the circumstances of his treatment; at which his generous host laughed heartily, and assured him it agreed with his neighbour's general character.

"Here our wanderer was most hospitably entertained, and kindly urged to prolong his stay, with a liberal offer to be supplied with whatever money he should want, and a man and horse to attend him home. Oliver begged leave to depart at the end of three days; which were most agreeably spent in the company of this worthy gentleman and two beautiful daughters, who did all in their power to entertain and divert him. At his departure he refused the offer of the servant and horse, and only accepted the loan of three half guineas.

"And now, dear mother, he concluded, after having struggled so hard to come home to you, I wonder you are not more rejoiced to see me.—She, and all present, expressed their joy at his return, and enjoined him to transmit the most early and grateful acknowledgments to his kind benefactor.

"His uncle Contarine, who was also reconciled to him, now resolved to send him to the temple, that he might make the law his profession. But in his way to London, he met at Dublin with a sharper, who tempted him to play, and emptied his pockets of fifty pounds, with which he had been furnished for his voyage and journey.

"He was obliged again to return to his poor mother, whose sorrow at his miscarriages need not be described, and his own distress and disgrace may readily be conceived. To make short of the story, he was again forgiven, his good uncle received him once more into favor, and it was finally decided that he should now be bred to the study of physic. With this view he was sent to Edinburgh. From that time the writer of this narrative was a stranger to his history: but she hath seen letters to his

friends, which he wrote from Switzerland, Germany, and Italy."

We were unwilling to interrupt the thread of this narrative with dates and extracts from the college register. But these, with some additional anecdotes, we shall now supply,

Of his entrance at college we have the following record.*

1744. *Jun.* 11. *Olvarius Goldsmith, Siz. Filius Caroli, Clerici, ann. agens* 15, *natus in Comitatu Westmeath,*† *educatus sub ferula Mi. Hughes. Admissus est. Tutor M. Wilder.*

His being admitted a sizer in Trinity College, Dublin, at that early age, denotes a remarkable proficiency. Sizers there are expected to come better prepared than other boys, and therefore usually apply for admission somewhat later in life.

But, whatever hopes might have been formed of his attaining here the distinctions of genius and learning, they were completely blasted by the unfortunate quarrel which we have related between him and his tutor, Teaker Wilder, a man of the most morose and merciless temper, who thenceforth persecuted him with unremitted cruelty, especially at the quarterly examinations, when he would insult him before his fellow-students, by sarcastic taunts and ironical applauses of the severest malignity.

* Communicated to Mr. Malone by the rev. Dr. Thomas Wilson, late fellow of Trinity College, Dublin.

† His father being then settled in Westmeath, occasioned this mistake of the county in which he was supposed to be born.

Under this savage tutor poor Goldsmith was exposed to so many mortifications, that the consequence was habitual despondence and its concomitant, idleness. One of his cotemporaries describes him as, "perpetually lounging about the college-gate." The very same is recorded of Johnson,* and shews that these two distinguished writers rose to their eminence in literature from the most unpromising beginnings.

In such circumstances it was not to be expected that Goldsmith could be a candidate for the usual premiums, nor are we to wonder that he did not obtain a scholarship: yet, in June 15th, 1747, he was elected one of the exhibitioners on the foundation of Erasmus Smyth.†

He had not long before been publicly censured for being concerned with many other students in raising a great tumult in the city, occasioned by a scholar's having been arrested in a street adjoining to the college.

The precincts of the university have always been held privileged from the intrusion of bailiffs. In the spring of the year 1747, this privilege was said to have been violated. To revenge this supposed insult, a numerous body of scholars rushed into the town, explored the dens of the bailiffs, and conducting the prisoners in triumph to the college, pumped them severely in an old cistern. It was then proposed to them by a leader of their riots, to break open Newgate, and make a general goal-delivery. The enterprise was attempted; but the assailants

* See Boswell's Life, &c. 8vo. vol. I, p. 52.

† So Dr. Wilson.

were beat off by artillery: and some unfortunate spectators were reported to have lost their lives.

Several of the ringleaders were expelled the university; but Goldsmith having made an ingenuous confession, was only punished by a public admonition, on May 25, 1747.*

Although Goldsmith's indolence was grown habitual, his genius sometimes dawned through the gloom. Translations from the classics occasionally made by him at this period, are still remembered by his cotemporaries,† with applause. But, not having attained the usual distinctions, and the cha racter of a sizer in that university, who misses both premiums and a scholarship, being little respected, his residence in college grew daily less eligible, so that probably he retired into the country, and came to Dublin, only to answer for his degree and to commence.

He was not indeed admitted to the degree of Bachelor of Arts till February 27, 1749, O. S.; two years after the regular time.‡

The loss of his father was now supplied to him by his uncle, the rev. Thomas Contarine,§ whose

* In the words of the sentence, Quod seditioni favisset et tumultuantibus opem tulisset. So Dr. Wilson.

† Communicated by the rev. Mr. Wolfen.

‡ So Dr. Wilson. The college register having been lately examined, the above entry could not be found.

§ This respectable clergyman, who was rector of Kilmore, near Carrick-on-Shannon, had been cotemporary in Dublin college with Berkley, the celebrated bishop of Cloyne, and continued in habits of intimacy with him during their lives. He is even reported to have saved the life of that philosopher, in the course of the well-

penetration probably enabled him to see the brilliancy of Oliver's genius, through all the dark shades which obscured and nearly overwhelmed it.

known experiment in which he engaged for the purpose of forming a judgment of the degrees of pain suffered by suffocation.

The history of Mr. Contarine's family is too remarkable not to deserve a place in a note. He was lineally descended from the noble family of the Contarini of Venice; one of the most illustrious in that republic. In Roman catholic countries the younger sons and daughters of the highest descent are often condemned to monastic life and vows of celibacy. The ancestor of our poet's uncle, by a double violation of this law, married a noble nun. Being obliged to fly with the partner of his guilt, or indiscretion, they first sought refuge in France, where his wife died of the small pox. Being there pursued by the ecclesiastical censures, Contarini retired to England; but the puritanical manners which at that time prevailed affording him but a cold reception, he was on his removal to Ireland, when, at Chester, he met with a young lady of the name of Chaloner, related to Dr. Chaloner, sometime provost of Trinity College, Dublin. To her personal accomplishments she added a considerable proficiency in the Italian language; and the pleasure they derived from each other's conversation led to a more interesting attachment, which terminated in their marriage. Conforming afterwards to the established church, he, by the interest of her family, obtained ecclesiastical preferment in the diocese of Elphin: and their lineal descendant was the rev. Mr. Contarine, whose unremitted kindness to our bard demanded this account of him from his biographer.

This worthy man left but one daughter, whom he saw happily married to James Lawder, esq. of Kilmore, in the county of Roscommon, who was remarkable for the tragical termination of his life, long after the death of our poet. This gentleman had bought, at Dublin, a strong iron chest, to secure his papers and money; which exciting an opinion in his servants and labourers that it contained vast treasures, they conspired to murder the family and rob the house; and at the same time determined to burn a house in the neighbourhood, that they might the better escape during the confusion. Two of these objects they were unfortunately successful in accomplishing. After shooting the husband with his own blunderbuss, and supposing they had also dispatched the wife (though she

The persevering friendship of this good clergyman extended, as we have seen, his constant protection to him under every difficulty, till he had finally fixed him at Edinburgh, about the latter end of the year 1752, or the beginning of the following year.

Among many instances which might be mentioned of his heedlessness and absence, at this period, the following may be recorded. Goldsmith, having on his arrival from Leith to Edinburgh employed a cawdy, or porter, to take his luggage, set off in search of a lodging; which having taken, and told the cawdy to leave his portmanteau, he sallied forth to take a view of the city, without having inquired the name of his landlady, or that of the street in which she lived. Having wandered about till it was dark, he recollected his omission, when it was too late to remedy it; and had he not fortunately met with the porter whom he had engaged in the morning, he might probably have remained all night in the street.

With this landlady he had agreed not only for lodging, but board; but as the latter was very scantily supplied, of which he used to give a very ludicrous account; namely, that she made a leg of mutton, dished up in different modes, serve them for a week, a dish of broth being made from the bones on the seventh day, he found it expedient to remove to a lodging where were other students of medicine,

indeed survived) they carried off the plate and about 300l. in money; and though they failed in burning the next house, as they intended, they escaped for that time. But the plunder soon after detected the plunderers, and not fewer than six of these wretches were convicted and executed.

whom he frequently entertained with his songs and stories. These endeavours to amuse, it must be confessed, were, however, from an inordinate desire of gaining applause, and of setting the table in a roar, too often blended with grimace and buffoonery, from which defects, notwithstanding he was afterwards introduced into the politest company, his conversation was never wholly exempt.

"The misfortune of Goldsmith in conversation,"* observed Dr. Johnson several years after this period, whose opinion on this subject may with propriety be introduced in this place, "is this: he goes on, without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small. As they say of a generous man, it is a pity he is not rich; we may say of Goldsmith, it is a pity he is not knowing. He would not keep his knowledge to himself."

The same author again observed,† that "Goldsmith should not be for ever attempting to shine in conversation; he has not temper for it; he is so much mortified when he fails. A game of jokes is composed partly of skill, partly of chance. A man may be beat at times by one who has not the tenth part of his wit. Now, Goldsmith's putting himself against another is like a man laying a hundred to one, who cannot spare the hundred. It is not worth a man's while. A man should not lay a hundred to one, unless he can easily spare it, though he has a hundred chances for him: he can get but a guinea, and he may lose a hundred. Goldsmith is in this

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, 3d edit. vol. II, p. 192.

† Ibid. p. 229.

state. When he contends, if he gets the better, it is a very little addition to a man of his literary reputation: if he does not get the better, he is miserably vexed."

Here, for some time, he attended the lectures of Monroe, and the other professors in the medical line. But his attention to his studies was by no means regular; and his health was considerably injured, and his pocket frequently drained, by his too often mixing in scenes of dissipation. During that time he is said by some of his cotemporaries to have given occasional proofs of his poetical talents. Nothing, however, of so early a date has been transmitted to us, excepting a private letter to a gentleman of his acquaintance in Ireland; which, on account of its ease and vivacity, we shall here introduce.

TO ROBERT BRAINTON, Esq.

AT BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

Edinburgh, Sept. 26, 1753

My dear Bob,

How many good excuses (and you know I was ever good at an excuse) might I call up, to vindicate my past shameful silence. I might tell how I wrote a long letter at my first coming hither: that business (with business you know I was always pestered) had never given me time to finger a pen. But I suppress that and twenty more equally plausible, and as easily invented, since they might all be attended with a slight inconvenience of being known to be lies. Let me then speak truth. An hereditary indolence (I have it from my mother's side)

has hitherto prevented my writing to you, and still prevents my writing at least twenty-five letters more, due to my friends in Ireland. No turnspit gets up into his wheel with more reluctance than I sit down to write. Yet no dog ever loved the roast meat he turns better than I do him I now address. Yet, what shall I say, now I am entered? Shall I tire you with a description of this unfruitful country? where I must lead you over their hills all brown with heath, or their valleys scarcely able to feed a rabbit? Man alone seems to be the only creature who has arrived to the natural size in this poor soil. Every part of the country presents the same dismal landscape. No grove nor brook lend their music to cheer the stranger, or make the inhabitants forget their poverty. Yet, with all these disadvantages, enough to call him down to humility, a Scotchman is one of the proudest things alive. The poor have pride ever ready to relieve them. If mankind should happen to despise them, they are masters of their own admiration; and that they can plentifully bestow upon themselves. From their pride and poverty, as I take it, results one advantage this country enjoys; namely, the gentlemen here are much better bred than among us. No such character here as our fox-hunter: and they have expressed great surprise when I informed them that some men of a thousand pounds a year, in Ireland, spend their whole lives in running after a hare, drinking to be drunk, and getting every girl with child that will let them. And, truly, if such a being, equipped in his hunting dress, came among a circle of Scots gentlemen, they would behold him with the same astonishment that a countryman does

king George on horseback. The men here have generally high cheek bones, and are lean and swarthy, fond of action, dancing in particular. Though now I have mentioned dancing, let me say something of their balls, which are very frequent here. When a stranger enters the dancing-hall, he sees one end of the room taken up by the ladies, who sit dismally in a group by themselves. On the other end stand their pensive partners, that are to be. But no more intercourse between the sexes than there are between two countries at war. The ladies indeed may ogle and the gentlemen sigh; but an embargo is laid on any closer commerce. At length, to interrupt hostilities, the lady directress, or intendant, or what you will, pitches on a gentleman and lady to walk a minute; which they perform with a formality that approaches to despondence. After five or six couple have thus walked the gauntlet, all stand up to country dances; each gentleman furnished with a partner from the aforesaid lady directress; so they dance much, say nothing, and thus concludes our assembly. I told a Scotch gentleman that such profound silence resembled the antient procession of the Roman matrons, in honor of Ceres; and the Scotch gentleman told me (and, faith, I believe he was right) that I was a very great pedant for my pains. Now I am come to the ladies; and to shew that I love Scotland and every thing that belongs to so charming a country, I insist on it, and will give him leave to break my head that denies it, that the Scotch ladies are ten thousand times finer and handsomer than the Irish. To be sure now I see your sisters Betty and Peggy vastly surprised at my partiality; but tell them flatly I don't value

them a potato, their fine skins or eyes, or good sense, or——for I say and will maintain it; and, as a convincing proof (I am in a great passion) of what I assert, the Scotch ladies say it themselves. But, to be less serious, where will you find a language so prettily become a pretty mouth as the broad Scotch? And the women here speak it in its highest purity: for instance, teach one of the young ladies at home to pronounce the "*Whoar wull I gong*," with a becoming widening of mouth, and I'll lay my life they'll wound every hearer. We have no such character here as a coquet, but, alas! how many envious prudes! Some days ago, I walked into my lord Kilcoubry's, (don't be surprised, my lord is but a glover) when the duchess of H. (that fair who sacrificed her beauty to ambition, and her inward peace to a title and gilt equipage (passed by in her chariot; her battered husband, or more properly the guardian of her charms, sat beside her. Straight envy began, in the shape of no less than three ladies who sat with me, to find faults in her faultless form. ——"For my part," says the first, "I think, what I always thought, that the duchess has too much of the red in her complexion."—"Madam, I am of your opinion," says the second; "I think her face has a palish cast, too much on the delicate order." —"And let me tell you," adds the third lady, whose mouth was puckered up so as scarcely to admit a pea, "that the duchess has fine lips, but she wants a mouth." At this every lady drew up her mouth, as if going to pronounce the letter P. But how ill, my Bob, does it become me to ridicule women, with whom I have scarcely any correspondence? There are, 'tis certain, handsome women here; and 'tis as

certain they have handsome men to keep them company. An ugly and a poor man is society only for himself; and such society the world lets me enjoy in great abundance. Fortune has given you circumstances, and nature a person, to look charming in the eyes of the fair. Nor do I envy my dear Bob such blessings, while I may sit down and laugh at the world, and at myself, the most ridiculous object in it. But you see I am grown downright splenetic, and perhaps the fit may continue till I hear from you. And yet I know you can't send much news from Ireland; but, such as it is, send it all. Every thing you write will be agreeable to

Yours, &c.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

When Goldsmith had attended the lectures, and gone through the usual courses at Edinburgh, he, with the consent of his beneficent uncle, was about to remove to Leyden, in order to complete his medical studies, when his departure is said to have been accelerated by a debt he had too generously but imprudently contracted, by being surety for a fellow-student. For this he was arrested, but soon released by the liberal assistance of two friends, Mr. Laughlane Maclane and Dr. Sleigh, who were then in college.* In his voyage to Holland he met with a very singular adventure, and had a very narrow escape from shipwreck, as appears from the following letter, in which he introduces his remarks on that country.

* This would not have deserved mention here, but that, in the former memoirs of Dr. Goldsmith, it is retailed at length, and said to have happened at Sunderland. But what occurred to him at Newcastle (as described below) is apparently the occasion of the mistake.

TO THE

REV. THOMAS CONTARINE.

Leyden, (the date wanting.)

Dear Sir,

I suppose by this time I am accused of either neglect or ingratitude, and my silence imputed to my usual slowness of writing. But believe me, Sir, when I say, that till now I had not an opportunity of sitting down with that ease of mind which writing required. You may see by the top of the letter that I am at Leyden; but of my journey hither you must be informed. Sometime after the receipt of your last, I embarked for Bordeaux, on board a Scotch ship, called the St. Andrews, captain John Wall, master. The ship made a tolerable appearance, and, as another inducement, I was let to know that six agreeable passengers were to be my company. Well, we were but two days at sea when a storm drove us into a city of England, called Newcastle-upon-Tyne. We all went ashore, to refresh us, after the fatigue of our voyage. Seven men and I were one day on shore, and on the following evening, as we were all very merry, the room door bursts open: enters a serjeant and twelve grenadiers, with their bayonets screwed, and puts us all under the King's arrest. It seems my company were Scotchmen in the French service, and had been in Scotland to enlist soldiers for the French army. I endeavoured all I could to prove my innocence; however, I remained in prison, with the rest, a fortnight, and with difficulty got off even then. Dear Sir, keep this all a secret, or at least say it was for debt; * for if it were once known at the university,

I should hardly get a degree. But hear how Providence interposed in my favour: the ship was gone on to Bordeaux, before I got from prison, and was wrecked at the mouth of the Garonne, and every one of the crew were drowned. It happened the last great storm. There was a ship at that time ready for Holland: I embarked, and in nine days, thank my God, I arrived safe at Rotterdam; whence I travelled by land to Leyden; and whence I now write.

"You may expect some account of this country, and though I am not well qualified for such an undertaking, yet I shall endeavour to satisfy some part of your expectations. Nothing surprised me more than the books every day published, descriptive of the manners of this country. Any young man who takes it into his head to publish his travels, visits the countries he intends to describe; passes through them with as much inattention as his valet de chambre; and consequently, not having a fund himself to fill a volume, he applies to those who wrote before him, and gives us the manners of a country, not as he must have seen them, but such as they might have been fifty years before. The modern Dutchman is quite a different creature from him of former times: he in every thing imitates a Frenchman, but in his easy disengaged air, which is the result of keeping polite company. The Dutchman is vastly ceremonious, and is perhaps exactly what a Frenchman might have been in the reign of Louis XIV. Such are the better bred. But

* This proposal seems absurd, but it may account for the report mentioned by some of his biographers, of his having been, on his putting to shore, arrested for a debt contracted at Edinburgh, &c.

the downright Hollander is one of the oddest figures in nature : upon a head of lank hair he wears a half-cocked narrow hat, laced with black ribbon : no coat, but seven waistcoats, and nine pair of breeches ; so that his hips reach almost up to his armpits. This well-clothed vegetable is now fit to see company, or make love. But what a pleasing creature is the object of his appetite ? Why she wears a large fur cap with a deal of Flanders lace : and for every pair of breeches he carries, she puts on two petticoats.

"A Dutch lady burns nothing about her phlegmatic admirer but his tobacco. You must know, Sir, every woman carries in her hand a stove with coals in it, which, when she sits, she snugs under her petticoats ; and at this chimney dozing Strephon lights his pipe. I take it that this continual smoking is what gives the man the ruddy healthful complexion he generally wears, by draining his superfluous moisture, while the woman, deprived of this amusement, overflows with such vicidities as tint the complexion, and give that paleness of visage which low fenny grounds and moist air conspire to cause. A Dutch woman and Scotch will well bear an opposition. The one is pale and fat, the other lean and ruddy : the one walks as if she were straddling after a go-cart, and the other takes too masculine a stride. I shall not endeavour to deprive either country of its share of beauty ; but must say, that of all objects on this earth, an English farmer's daughter is most charming. Every woman there is a complete beauty, while the higher class of women want many of the requisites to make them even tolerable. Their pleasures here are very dull, though

very various. You may smoke, you may doze, you may go to the Italian comedy, as good an amusement as either of the former. This entertainment always brings in Harlequin, who is generally a magician, and in consequence of his diabolical art, performs a thousand tricks on the rest of the persons of the drama, who are all fools. I have seen the pit in a roar of laughter at this humour, when with his sword he touches the glass from which another was drinking. 'Twas not his face they laughed at; for that was masked. They must have seen something vastly queer in the wooden sword, that neither I, nor you, Sir, were you there, could see.

"In winter, when their canals are frozen, every house is forsaken, and all people are on the ice; sleds drawn by horses, and skating, are at that time the reigning amusements. They have boats here, that slide on the ice, and are driven by the winds. When they spread all their sails, they go more than a mile and a half a minute, and their motion is so rapid, the eye can scarcely accompany them. Their ordinary manner of travelling is very cheap and very convenient: they sail in covered boats drawn by horses; and in these you are sure to meet people of all nations. Here the Dutch slumber, the French chatter, and the English play at cards. Any man who likes company may have them to his taste. For my part, I generally detached myself from all society, and was wholly taken up in observing the face of the country. Nothing can equal its beauty: wherever I turn my eye, fine houses, elegant gardens, statues, grottoes, vistas, presented themselves; but when you enter their towns, you are charmed beyond description. No misery is to be seen here; every one is usefully employed.

"Scotland and this country bear the highest contrast. There hills and rocks intercept every prospect: here 'tis all a continued plain. There you might see a well-dressed duchess issuing from a dirty close;* and here a dirty Dutchman inhabiting a palace. The Scotch may be compared to a tulip planted in dung; but I never see a Dutchman in his own house but I think of a magnificent Egyptian temple dedicated to an ox. Physic is by no means taught here so well as in Edinburgh: and in all Leyden there are but four British students, owing to all necessaries being so extremely dear, and the professors so very lazy (the chemical professor excepted) that we don't much care to come hither. I am not certain how long my stay here may be; however I expect to have the happiness of seeing you at Kilmore, if I can, next March.

"Direct to me, if I am honoured with a letter from you, to Madam Diallion's, at Leyden.

"Thou best of men, may heaven guard and preserve you, and those you love.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH."

In Leyden, where he resided about a year, he studied chemistry under Gaubius, and anatomy under Albinus; but, with the exception of the former, he has given in his letter to his uncle but an unfavourable account of the other professors. It should, however, be observed, that both this account and his character of the inhabitants in general seem to have been hastily written, and too soon hazarded after his arrival in Holland, to deserve to be consi-

* The narrow streets or lanes in Edinburgh are called closes.

dered as very exact. They are rather good humoured attempts to divert his friends in Ireland, than the result of mature observation and reflection.

At Leyden he suffered all the vicissitudes of fortune at play, to which he was now unhappily addicted. One morning he came to a fellow-student,* with his pockets literally full of money, and with exultation counted out to him a large sum, which he had won the preceding evening. His friend earnestly pressed him to play no more, but to secure his present gains as a fund for completing his medical studies. Oliver, who could always see what was right, though he could not always pursue it, highly approved this advice, and declared his firm resolution of making it the rule of his future conduct.—But the seductions of the gaming-table were irresistible, and he was soon after stripped of every shilling. In this exigence he received pecuniary assistance from the gentleman above-mentioned, with which he determined to quit Holland, and to visit the adjacent countries. But, unfortunately, his curiosity led him to view a garden, where the choicest flowers were reared for sale, and it is well known to what a height of extravagance the Dutch florists have raised the price of these beautiful productions of nature when improved by art. Poor Goldsmith, recollecting that his uncle was an admirer of such rarities, without reflecting on the reduced state of his own finances, was tempted to purchase some of those costly flower roots, to be sent as a present to Ireland, and thereby left him-

* The late Dr. Ellis, clerk of the Irish house of commons, from whom the following anecdotes are related.

self so little cash, that he is said to have set out on his travels with only one clean shirt, and no money in his pocket.

He resolved to make the tour of Europe on foot, and to trust to Providence for his resources. He has observed in his Enquiry into the present State of Polite Literature in Europe, Chap. XIII, that "countries wear very different appearances to tra-"vellers of different circumstances. A man, who "is whirled through Europe in his post-chaise, and "the pilgrim, who walks the grand tour on foot, "will form very different conclusions, *Haud inex-*"*pertus loquor.*"*

He used to give an account of his own travels, so nearly resembling those of the wanderer in his Vicar of Wakefield, that some of the following particulars are believed to belong to himself. "I had "some knowledge of music, and now turned what "was once my amusement into a present means of "subsistence. Whenever I approached a peasant's "house towards night-fall, I played one of my most "merry tunes, and that procured me not only a "lodging but subsistence for the next day. I once "or twice attempted to play to people of fashion, "but they always thought my performance odious, "and never rewarded me even with a trifle."

His classical learning procured him also entertainment at the monasteries, especially those of the Irish nation. And in some of the foreign universities and convents, upon certain days, theses are maintained against any adventitious disputant; for which, if the champion opposes with some dexteri-

* This last clause he omitted in his second edit.

ty, he may claim a gratuity in money, a dinner, and a bed for the night. This afforded another resource for our forlorn pilgrim. "Thus," says he, "I fought "my way towards England, walked alone from city "to city, examined mankind more nearly, and, if I "may so express it, saw both sides of the picture."

In this manner he travelled through Flanders, and some parts of France and Germany, till he arrived at Switzerland, where he first cultivated his poetical talents with success. For, in his dedication of the Traveller to his brother Henry, we are told that part of that delightful poem was written in that country. The golden mediocrity which inhabits those rugged mountains appears to have been most congenial to his feelings at that time: when, seeking shelter under the peasant's thatched but hospitable roof, he became at once their favourite and that of the Muses. Hence it was that, descending to Italy, he made his description of that country so much more vigorous and picturesque than that of Addison; though they both viewed it through pretty much the same political optics.

It has been related, by former biographers, that at Geneva Goldsmith was engaged to be travelling tutor, or companion, to a young Englishman, who, having been bred an attorney, had succeeded to a large fortune from his uncle, a pawnbroker in London; and who now resolved to improve himself by travel. It is added that, through the sordid avarice of the pupil, the tutor was soon released from his charge. But it has, however, been doubted by his intimate friends, whether this connexion has not rather been imagined from the adventure in the novel, than really experienced by himself.

He then went to Padua in Italy, where he continued six months; and if he ever took any medical degree, it was probably in this ancient school of medicine.* Of Italy he visited all the northern part, and saw Venice, Verona, and Florence. But, losing his good uncle and generous benefactor, while he was in Italy, he was obliged to travel on foot through France to England; still lodging in convents, wherever he could find any of his own nation. He landed at Dover about the breaking out of the war in 1756. Such is the account he used to give of this peregrination, in which he spent about a year.

When he had crossed the sea, he had still to stem the tide of adversity: for in England he found neither his German flute, nor his skill in disputation, would procure him a supper; and he arrived in London in the extremity of distress. He tried to be admitted an assistant in an academy, but found even that humble station at first difficult to obtain, for want of a recommendation or testimonial. Oliver, relying on his talents, hoped at some future period to emerge from this obscurity; and, unwilling that these his inferior struggles should be afterwards remembered, made his application under a feigned name. When he was required, however, to refer the master of the school to some respectable person for a character, he was in no small difficulty. In this

* However, a former biographer says, " He took the degree of bachelor of physic at Louvain. (Life of Dr. O. Goldsmith, printed for Swan, 1774. 8vo.)

In February, 1769, Dr. Goldsmith made an excursion to Oxford with Dr. Johnson, and was admitted in that celebrated university ad eundem gradum, which he said was that of M. B. See also his agreement with the bookseller below.

exigence he wrote to Dr. Radcliffe, a mild benevolent man, who had been joint-tutor with his persecutor Wilder, in Trinity College, and had sometimes lectured the other's pupils. He explained to him his situation, and told him that the same post which conveyed this intelligence would bring him another letter of inquiry from the schoolmaster, to which he intreated the doctor to return an answer. With this request he readily complied, and in a subsequent letter he received a very entertaining account of our poet's travels and adventures.*

How long he retained this usher's place is not known; but that he had deeply experienced the miseries of such a situation might be collected not only from the passages he has thrown into the mouth of his philosophical wanderer, in the Vicar of Wakefield, but from the very feeling manner in which he would thus describe them in conversation.

"After all the fatigues of the day, the poor usher of an academy is obliged to sleep in the same bed with a Frenchman, a teacher of that language to the boys; who disturbs him every night an hour, perhaps, in papering and filleting his hair, and stinks worse than a carrion, with his rancid pomatums, when he lays his head beside him on his bolster."

Subsequent to his attempt as an usher, his want of immediate subsistence induced him to apply to several apothecaries, to be employed by them as a journeyman: but his threadbare coat, his uncouth figure, and Hibernian dialect, occasioned his meeting with repeated refusals; till at length a chymist,

* So we are told by Dr. Campbell, in his Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland.

moved by his forlorn condition, and perhaps surprised at his medical knowledge, is said to have taken him in his laboratory, where he became an useful assistant. He was in this situation when he discovered that Dr. Sleigh, an old fellow-student of his at Edinburgh, was then in London: by him Goldsmith was affectionately received, and liberally invited to share his purse. This gentleman afterwards settled as a physician in Cork, his native city, and was rising rapidly into eminence, when he was cut off, in the flower of his age, by an inflammatory fever; which deprived the world of a fine scholar, a sound and intelligent physician, and an honest man.

Thus assisted, our author had recourse to his original profession of physic; and the Bankside in Southwark was the first seat of his medical practice; whence he afterwards removed to the Temple, or its neighbourhood. What success attended his exertions in these situations is now unknown; it is however certain that his pecuniary emoluments were inconsiderable; for he used to confess that, although he had plenty of patients, he got no fees.

Here he had leisure to cultivate his natural abilities; and the merit of his literary compositions soon supplied the defects of medical practice.

We have obtained the following account of him, at this period, from another very respectable physician, to whom he was much attached when he was at college at Edinburgh.

"From the time of Goldsmith's leaving Edinburgh, in the year 1754, I never saw him till the year 1756, when I was in London, attending the hospitals and lectures. Early in January, he called upon me one morning, before I was up, and on my

entering the room, I recognized my old acquaintance, dressed in a rusty full-trimmed black suit, with his pockets full of papers, which instantly reminded me of the poet in Garrick's farce of Lethe. After we had finished our breakfast, he drew from his pocket part of a tragedy, which he said he had brought for my correction. In vain I pleaded inability, when he began to read; and every part on which I expressed a doubt as to the propriety was immediately blotted out. I then more earnestly pressed him not to trust to my judgment, but to the opinion of persons better qualified to decide on dramatic compositions; on which he told me that he had submitted his production, so far as he had written, to Mr. Richardson, the author of Clarissa; on which I peremptorily declined offering another criticism on the performance. The name and subject of the tragedy have unfortunately escaped my memory; neither do I recollect with exactness how much he had written, though I am inclined to believe that he had not completed the third act. I never heard whether he afterwards finished it. In this visit I remember his relating a strange Quixotic scheme he had in contemplation, of going to decypher the inscriptions on the *written mountains*, though he was altogether ignorant of Arabic, or the language in which they might be supposed to be written. The salary of 300l. per annum, which had been left for the purpose, was the temptation!"

That his literary and professional exertions were sufficient at this time for his support, is evident from the following letter, addressed to the gentleman who had married his eldest sister.

TO DANIEL HODSON, Esq.

AT LISHOY, NEAR BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

Dear Sir,

It may be four years since my last letters went to Ireland, and to you in particular. I received no answer; probably, because you never wrote to me. My brother Charles, however, informs me of the fatigue you were at in soliciting a subscription to assist me, not only among my friends and relations, but acquaintance in general. Though my pride might feel some repugnance at being thus relieved, yet my gratitude can suffer no diminution. How much am I obliged to you, to them, for such generosity, or (why should not your virtues have the proper name) for such charity, to me at that juncture. Sure I am born to ill fortune, to be so much a debtor, and unable to repay. But, to say no more of this, too many professions of gratitude are often considered as indirect petitions for future favours; let me only add, that my not receiving that supply was the cause of my present establishment at London. You may easily imagine what difficulties I had to encounter, left as I was, without friends, recommendations, money, or impudence; and that in a country where being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me unemployed. Many, in such circumstances, would have had recourse to the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But, with all my follies, I had principle to resist the one, and resolution to combat the other.

I suppose you desire to know my present situation. As there is nothing in it at which I should

blush, or which mankind could censure, I see no reason for making it a secret; in short, by a very little practice as a physician, and a very little reputation as a poet, I make a shift to live. Nothing is more apt to introduce us to the gates of the Muses than Poverty; but it were well if they only left us at the door; the mischief is, they sometimes choose to give us their company at the entertainment, and Want, instead of being gentleman-usher, often turns master of the ceremonies. Thus, upon hearing I write, no doubt you imagine I starve; and the name of an author naturally reminds you of a garret. In this particular I do not think proper to undeceive my friends. But whether I eat or starve, live in a first floor, or four pair of stairs high, I still remember them with ardour; nay, my very country comes in for a share of my affection. Unaccountable fondness for country! this *Maladie du Pays*, as the French call it! Unaccountable that he should still have an affection for a place, who never received, when in it, above common civility; who never brought any thing out of it except his brogue and his blunders. Surely my affection is equally ridiculous with the Scotchman's, who refused to be cured of the itch, because it made him unco'thoughtful of his wife and bonny Inverary. But now, to be serious, let me ask myself what gives me a wish to see Ireland again? The country is a fine one perhaps? No.—There are good company in Ireland? No.—The conversation there is generally made up of a smutty toast, or a bawdy song. The vivacity supported by some humble cousin, who has just folly enough to earn his dinner. —Then perhaps there's more wit and learning among the Irish? Oh, lord! no!—There has been more money spent in the encouragement of the Pondareen mare there one season, than given in rewards to learn-

ed men since the times of Usher. All their productions in learning amount to perhaps a translation, or a few tracts in divinity; and all their productions in wit to just nothing at all. Why the plague, then, so fond of Ireland? Then all at once, because you, my dear friend, and a few more, who are exceptions to the general picture, have a residence there. This it is that gives me all the pangs I feel in separation. I confess I carry this spirit sometimes to the souring the pleasures I at present possess. If I go to the opera, where Signora Columba pours out all the mazes of melody, I sit and sigh for Lishoy fireside, and Johnny Armstrong's Last Good Night from Peggy Golden. If I climb Flamstead Hill, than where nature never exhibited a more magnificent prospect, I confess it fine, but then I had rather be placed on the little mount before Lishoy gate, and there take in, to me, the most pleasing horizon in nature. Before Charles came hither, my thoughts sometimes found refuge from severer studies among my friends in Ireland. I fancied strange revolutions at home, but I find it was the rapidity of my own motion, that gave an imaginary one to objects really at rest. No alterations there. Some friends, he tells me, are still lean, but very rich: others very fat, but still very poor. Nay, all the news I hear from you is, that you sally out in visits among the neighbours, and sometimes make a migration from the blue bed to the brown. I could from my heart wish that you, and she, and Lishoy, and Ballymahon, and all of you, would fairly make a migration into Middlesex: though, upon second thoughts, this might be attended with a few inconveniences; therefore, as the mountain will not come to Mahomet, why Mahomet shall go to the mountain: or, to speak plain English, as you cannot conveniently pay me a visit, if next summer I

can contrive to be absent six weeks from London, I shall spend three of them among my friends in Ireland. But first believe me, my design is purely to visit, and neither to cut a figure nor levy contributions; neither to excite envy nor solicit favour: in fact, my circumstances are adapted to neither. I am too poor to be gazed at, and too rich to need assistance.

You see, dear Dan, how long I have been talking about myself; but attribute my vanity to my affection; as every man is fond of himself, and I consider you as a second self; I imagine you will consequently be pleased with these instances of egotism.

[*Some mention of private family affairs is here omitted.*]

My dear Sir, these things give me real uneasiness, and I could wish to redress them. But at present there is hardly a kingdom in Europe, in which I am not a debtor. I have already discharged my most threatening and pressing demands, for we must be just before we can be grateful. For the rest I need not say (you know I am)

Your affectionate kinsman,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Temple Exchange Coffee-house,
Near Temple-bar,
Where you may direct an answer,
December 27, 1757.

While he was thus endeavouring to support himself between his prescriptions and his pen, he renewed his acquaintance with several of the young physicians,

whom he had known at Edinburgh. Among these was a son of the Rev. Dr. Milner, a dissenting minister, who kept a classical school at Peckham, in Surry, of considerable eminence. Observing Dr. Goldsmith's distressed situation, he invited him to take the charge of his father's school, while he was confined by a long illness, which at length proved fatal; and, in return, his father, who had some interest with several of the India directors, promised to exert it in procuring for him a medical establishment under the East-India Company. This he faithfully performed, through the favour of Mr. Jones, one of the directors, and Dr. Goldsmith obtained a regular appointment to be physician to one of the factories in India, in the year 1758.

To prepare for his equipment, he drew up proposals to print, by subscriptions of five shillings, his intended publication of The Present State of Polite Literature in Europe. These he transmitted to his friends in Ireland; and that subscription, together with an account of his present situation and future prospects, are the subjects of the following letters.

The first and last being addressed to his nearest relatives, are perhaps hastily and carelessly written; but that to Mr. Mills is in the finest style of elegant and delicate epistolary composition.

TO DANIEL HODSON, ESQ.

AT LISHOY, NEAR BALLYMAHON, IRELAND.

(No date, but written in the summer of 1758.)

DEAR SIR,

YOU cannot expect regularity in one who is regular in nothing. Nay, were I forced to love you by rule, I dare venture to say, I could never do it sincere-

ly. Take me then with all my faults. Let me write when I please; for you see, I say what I please, and am only thinking aloud, when writing to you. I suppose you have heard of my intention of going to the East-Indies. The place of my destination is one of the factories on the coast of Coromandel, and I go in quality of physician and surgeon; for which the company has signed my warrant, which has already cost me ten pounds. I must also pay 50l. for my passage, and ten pounds for my sea stores: and the other incidental expenses of my equipment will amount to 60 or 70l. more. The salary is but trifling, *viz.* 100l. per ann. but the other advantages, if a person be prudent, are considerable. The practice of the place, if I am rightly informed, generally amounts to not less than one thousand pounds per ann.; for which the appointed physician has an exclusive privilege. This, with the advantages resulting from trade, with the high interest which money bears, *viz.* 20l. per cent. are the inducements which persuade me to undergo the fatigues of sea, the dangers of war, and the still greater dangers of the climate: which induce me to leave a place where I am every day gaining friends and esteem; and where I might enjoy all the conveniences of life. I am certainly wrong not to be contented with what I already possess, trifling as it is; for should I ask myself one serious question—What is it I want?—What can I answer? My desires are capricious, as the big-bellied woman's, who longed for a piece of her husband's nose. I have no certainty, it is true; but why cannot I do as some men of more merit, who have lived on more precarious terms? Scarron used jestingly to call himself the marquis of Quenault, which was the name of the bookseller that employed him: and why may not I assert my privilege and quality on the same pretensions? Yet, upon

deliberation, whatever airs I give myself on this side of the water, my dignity, I fancy, would be evaporated before I reached the other. I know you have in Ireland a very indifferent idea of a man who writes for bread; though Swift and Steele did so in the earliest part of their lives. You imagine, I suppose, that every author, by profession, lives in a garret, wears shabby clothes, and converses with the meanest company. Yet I do not believe there is one single writer, who has abilities to translate a French novel, that does not keep better company, wear finer clothes, and live more genteelly, than many who pride themselves for nothing else in Ireland. I confess it again, my dear Dan, that nothing but the wildest ambition could prevail on me to leave the enjoyment of that refined conversation which I am sometimes admitted to partake in, for uncertain fortune, and paltry show. You cannot conceive how I am sometimes divided: to leave all that is dear to me, gives me pain; but when I consider I may possibly acquire a genteel independence for life: when I think of that dignity which philosophy claims, to raise itself above contempt and ridicule; when I think thus, I eagerly long to embrace every opportunity of separating myself from the vulgar, as much in my circumstances, as I am already in my sentiments. I am going to publish a book, for an account of which I refer you to a letter, which I wrote to my brother Goldsmith. Circulate for me among your acquaintance a hundred proposals, which I have given orders may be sent to you: and if, in pursuance of such circulation, you should receive any subscriptions, let them, when collected, be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the same.

[*Omitting here what relates to private family affairs, he then adds:*]

I know not how my desire of seeing Ireland, which

had so long slept, has again revived with so much ardour. So weak is my temper, and so unsteady, that I am frequently tempted, particularly when low-spirited, to return home, and leave my fortune, though just beginning to look kinder. But it shall not be. In five or six years I hope to indulge these transports. I find I want constitution, and a strong steady disposition, which alone makes men great. I will, however, correct my faults, since I am conscious of them.

TO EDWARD MILLS, ESQ.

NEAR ROSCOMMON, IRELAND.

DEAR SIR,

YOU have quitted, I find, that plan of life which you once intended to pursue; and given up ambition for domestic tranquillity. Were I to consult your satisfaction alone in this change, I have the utmost reason to congratulate your choice; but when I consider my own, I cannot avoid feeling some regret, that one of my few friends has declined a pursuit, in which he had every reason to expect success. The truth is, like the rest of the world, I am self-interested in my concern; and do not so much consider the happiness you have acquired, as the honour I have probably lost in the change. I have often let my fancy loose when you were the subject, and have imagined you gracing the bench, or thundering at the bar; while I have taken no small pride to myself, and whispered all that I could come near, that this was my cousin. Instead of this, it seems you are contented to be merely a happy man; to be esteemed only by your acquaintance—to cultivate your paternal acres—to take unmolested a nap under one of your own haw-

thorns, or in Mrs. Mills' bed-chamber, which, even a poet must confess, is rather the most comfortable place of the two.

But, however your resolutions may be altered with respect to your situation in life, I persuade myself they are unalterable with regard to your friends in it. I cannot think the world has taken such entire possession of that heart, (once so susceptible of friendship,) as not to have left a corner there for a friend or two; but I flatter myself that even I have my place among the number. This I have a claim to, from the similitude of our dispositions; or, setting that aside, I can demand it as my right, by the most equitable law in nature; I mean that of retaliation: for, indeed, you have more than your share in mine. I am a man of few professions, and yet this very instant I cannot avoid the painful apprehension, that my present professions (which speak not half my feelings) should be considered only as a pretext to cover a request, as I have a request to make. No, my dear Ned, I know you are too generous to think so; and you know me too proud to stoop to mercenary insincerity. I have a request, it is true, to make; but, as I know to whom I am a petitioner, I make it without diffidence or confusion. It is, in short, this: I am going to publish a book in London, entitled, An Essay on the Present State of Taste and Literature in Europe. Every work published here the printers in Ireland republish there, without giving the author the least consideration for his copy. I would in this respect disappoint their avarice, and have all the additional advantages that may result from the sale of my performance there to myself. The book is now printing in London, and I have requested Dr. Radcliff, Mr. Lawder, Mr. Bryanton, my brother Mr. Henry Goldsmith, and brother-in-law Mr. Hodson, to circulate my proposals

among their acquaintance. The same request I now make to you, and have accordingly given directions to Mr. Bradley, bookseller, in Dame-street, Dublin, to send you a hundred proposals. Whatever subscriptions, pursuant to those proposals, you may receive, when collected, may be transmitted to Mr. Bradley, who will give a receipt for the money, and be accountable for the books. I shall not, by a paltry apology, excuse myself for putting you to this trouble. Were I not convinced that you found more pleasure in doing good natured things, than uneasiness at being employed in them, I should not have singled you out on this occasion. It is probable you would comply with such a request, if it tended to the encouragement of any man of learning whatsoever. What then may not he expect who has claims of family and friendship to enforce his?

I am, dear sir, your sincere
Friend and humble servant,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

London, Temple Exchange
Coffee-House, Temple-Bar,
August 7, 1759.

TO THE REV. HENRY GOLDSMITH,

AT LOWFIELD, NEAR BALLYMORE, IN WEST-MEATH, IRELAND.

[This is evidently a second letter, subsequent to all the preceding, and written about the year 1759.]

DEAR SIR,

YOUR punctuality in answering a man, whose trade is writing, is more than I had reason to expect; and yet you see me generally fill a whole sheet, which

is all the recompence I can make for being so frequently troublesome. The behaviour of Mr. Mills and Mr. Lawder is a little extraordinary. However, their answering neither you nor me is a sufficient indication of their disliking the employment which I assigned them. As their conduct is different from what I had expected, so I have made an alteration in mine. I shall, the beginning of next month, send over two hundred and fifty books*, which are all that I fancy can be well sold among you, and I would have you make some distinction in the persons who have subscribed. The money, which will amount to sixty pounds, may be left with Mr. Bradley, as soon as possible. I am not certain but I shall quickly have occasion for it. I have met with no disappointment with respect to my East-India voyage; nor are my resolutions altered; though, at the same time, I must confess it gives me some pain to think I am almost beginning the world at the age of thirty-one. Though I never had a day's sickness since I saw you, yet I am not that strong active man you once knew me. You scarcely can conceive how much eight years of disappointment, anguish, and study, have worn me down. If I remember right, you are seven or eight years older than me; yet I dare venture to say, that if a stranger saw us both, he would pay me the honours of seniority. Imagine to yourself a pale melancholy visage, with two great wrinkles between the eye-brows, with an eye disgustingly severe, and a big wig; and you may have a perfect picture of my present appearance. On the other hand, I conceive you as perfectly sleek and healthy, passing many a happy day among your own children, or those who knew you a child.

* His book on The present State of Polite Literature in Europe, Subscription price 5s.

Since I knew what it was to be a man, this is a pleasure I have not known. I have passed my days among a parcel of cool designing beings, and have contracted all their suspicious manner in my own behaviour*. I should actually be as unfit for the society of my friends at home, as I detest that which I am obliged to partake of here. I can now neither partake of the pleasure of a revel, nor contribute to raise its jollity. I can neither laugh nor drink, have contracted an hesitating disagreeable manner of speaking, and a visage that looks ill-nature itself; in short, I have thought myself into a settled melancholy, and an utter disgust of all that life brings with it—Whence this romantic turn, that all our family are possessed with? Whence this love for every place and every country but that in which we reside? for every occupation but our own? this desire of fortune, and yet this eagerness to dissipate? I perceive, my dear sir, that I am at intervals for indulging this splenetic manner, and following my own taste, regardless of yours.

The reasons you have given me for breeding up your son a scholar, are judicious and convincing. I should, however, be glad to know for what particular profession he is designed. If he be assiduous, and divested of strong passions, (for passions in youth always lead to pleasure,) he may do very well in your college: for it must be owned, that the industrious poor have good encouragement there, perhaps better than in any other in Europe. But if he has ambition, strong passions, and an exquisite sensibility of contempt, do not send him there, unless you have no other trade for him except your own. It is impossible to conceive how much may be done by a proper

* This is all *gratis dictum*, for there never was a character so unsuspicious and so unguarded as the writer's.

education at home. A boy, for instance, who understands perfectly well Latin, French, Arithmetic, and the principles of the civil law, and can write a fine hand, has an education that may qualify him for any undertaking. And these parts of learning should be carefully inculcated, let him be designed for whatever calling he will. Above all things, let him never touch a romance or novel; those paint beauty in colours more charming than nature; and describe happiness that man never tastes. How delusive, how destructive, are those pictures of consummate bliss! They teach the youthful mind to sigh after beauty and happiness which never existed; to despise the little good which fortune has mixed in our cup, by expecting more than she ever gave; and in general, take the word of a man who has seen the world, and has studied human nature more by experience than precept; take my word for it, I say, that books teach us very little of the world. The greatest merit in a state of poverty would only serve to make the possessor ridiculous; may distress, but cannot relieve him. Frugality, and even avarice, in the lower orders of mankind, are true ambition. These afford the only ladder for the poor to rise to preferment. Teach, then, my dear sir, to your son thrift and economy. Let his poor wandering uncle's example be placed before his eyes. I had learned from books to be disinterested and generous, before I was taught from experience the necessity of being prudent. I had contracted the habits and notions of a philosopher; while I was exposing myself to the insidious approaches of cunning; and often by being, even with my narrow finances, charitable to excess, I forgot the rules of justice, and placed myself in the very situation of the wretch who thanked me for my bounty. When I am in the remotest part of the world, tell

him this, and perhaps he may improve from my example. But I find myself again falling into my gloomy habits of thinking.

My mother, I am informed, is almost blind; even though I had the utmost inclination to return home, under such circumstances I could not: for to behold her in distress, without a capacity of relieving her from it, would add too much to my splenetic habit. Your last letter was much too short: it should have answered some queries I had made in my former. Just sit down as I do, and write forward till you have filled all your paper; it requires no thought, at least from the ease with which my own sentiments rise when they are addressed to you. For, believe me, my head has no share in all I write; my heart dictates the whole. Pray, give my love to Bob Bryanton, and entreat him, from me, not to drink. My dear sir, give me some account about poor Jenny *. Yet her husband loves her; if so, she cannot be unhappy.

I know not whether I should tell you—yet why should I conceal those trifles, or indeed any thing from you?—There is a book of mine will be published in a few days, the life of a very extraordinary man—no less than the great Voltaire. You know already by the title, that it is no more than a catch-penny †. However, I spent but four weeks on the whole performance, for which I received twenty pounds. When published, I shall take some method of conveying it to you, unless you may think it dear of the postage, which may amount to four or five shillings. However, I fear you will not find an equivalence of

* His youngest sister, who had married unfortunately.

† This account of the performance by the author, will appear a sufficient reason for its not being introduced into the present edition of his works.

amusement. Your last letter, I repeat it, was too short; you should have given me your opinion of the design of the heroicomical poem which I sent you: you remember I intended to introduce the hero of the poem, as lying in a paltry alehouse. You may take the following specimen of the manner, which I flatter myself is quite original. The room in which he lies, may be described somewhat this way:—

> The window, patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
> That feebly show'd the state in which he lay.
> The sanded floor, that grits beneath the tread:
> The humid wall with paltry pictures spread;
> The game of goose was there expos'd to view,
> And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew:
> The seasons fram'd with listing, found a place,
> And Prussia's monarch show'd his lamp-black face.
> The morn was cold; he views with keen desire,
> A rusty grate unconscious of a fire.
> An unpaid reck'ning on the freeze was scor'd,
> And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board.

And now imagine, after his soliloquy, the landlord to make his appearance, in order to dun him for the reckoning:

> Not with that face, so servile and so gay,
> That welcomes every stranger that can pay,
> With sulky eye he smok'd the patient man,
> Then pull'd his breeches tight, and thus began, &c.

All this is taken, you see, from nature. It is a good remark of Montaign's, that the wisest men often have friends, with whom they do not care how much they play the fool. Take my present follies as instances of regard. Poetry is a much easier, and more agreeable species of composition than prose, and could a man live by it, it were not unpleasant employment to be a poet. I am resolved to leave no space, though I

should fill it up only by telling you, what you very well know already, I mean that I am,

Your most affectionate
Friend and brother,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

When this last letter was dated, Dr. Goldsmith appears to have grown cooler in his desire for an East-India voyage; and, if it was written within a month of the expected publication of his book, he had certainly given up that design for the present, though his general resolution, as we shall hereafter see, of travelling to Asia, remained still unaltered. Our author, some time in the year 1758, dined at Dr. Milner's table, in company with Mr. Griffiths, the publisher and proprietor of the Monthly Review, who invited him to become a writer in that literary Journal, and proposed to him such terms, as he deemed deserving his acceptance: which were his board, lodging, and a handsome salary.

These terms were stipulated in a written agreement, that was to continue for one year. In fulfilling his part of it, Dr. Goldsmith declared that he usually wrote for his employer every day from nine o'clock till two. At the end of seven or eight months, however, this connexion was dissolved by mutual consent; and our poet took lodgings in Green Arbour-court, in the Old Baily, where he completed his Inquiry into the present State of Polite Literature in Europe; which was published in 1759, by Dodsley.

He had removed thither early in that year; for a friend of his, paying him a visit at the beginning of March, 1759, found him in lodgings there so poor and uncomfortable, that he should not think it proper to mention the circumstance, if he did not consider it as

the highest proof of the splendour of Dr. Goldsmith's genius and talents, that by the bare exertion of their powers, under every disadvantage of person and fortune, he could gradually emerge from such obscurity to the enjoyment of all the comforts and even luxuries of life, and admission into the best societies in London.

The Doctor was writing his Inquiry, &c. in a wretched dirty room, in which there was but one chair, and when he, from civility, offered it to his visitant, himself was obliged to sit in the window. While they were conversing, some one gently rapped at the door, and being desired to come in, a poor ragged little girl, of very decent behaviour, entered, who, dropping a curtsie, said, "My mamma sends "her compliments, and begs the favour of you to lend "her a chamber-pot full of coals."

He afterwards removed to very decent lodgings in Wine-office-court, Fleet-street, where he wrote his Vicar of Wakefield, attended with the affecting circumstance of his being under arrest. When the knowledge of his situation was communicated to Johnson, he disposed of his manuscript for sixty pounds, to Mr. Newbery, the bookseller, and procured his enlargement. Although the money was then paid, the book was not published till some time after, when his fine poem, the Traveller, had established his fame *.

Dr. Goldsmith, speaking to his medical friend, to whom we have before alluded, and by whose communications we have been greatly obliged, asked him his opinion of this fascinating performance. "I spoke of "it," said his friend, "in the warm terms I thought it

* See an interesting account of this circumstance, in Boswell's Life of Johnson, Vol. I. p. 373.

" deserved, pointing out, however, certain parts which " I wished, had he had more time for the purpose, " had been altered or corrected*." Goldsmith concurred with me in my remarks, but added, that it was not from want of time it had not been done, as Newbery kept it by him in manuscript two years before he published it; he gave me, I think he said, 60l. for the copy, and had I made it ever so perfect or correct, I should not have had a shilling more.

When he first took up his residence in that court, our author was not personally acquainted with Johnson; and the first visit he ever received from that distinguished writer, was on May 31st, 1761; when he gave an invitation to him, and much other company, many of them literary men, to a supper in these lodgings.

One of the company then invited †, being intimate with our great Lexicographer, was desired to call upon him and take him with him. As they went together, the former was much struck with the studied neatness of Johnson's dress: he had on a new suit of clothes, a new wig nicely powdered, and every thing about him so perfectly dissimilar from his usual habits and appearance, that his companion could not help inquiring the cause of this singular transformation. " Why, sir," said Johnson, " I hear that " Goldsmith, who is a very great sloven, justifies his " disregard of cleanliness and decency, by quoting my " practice, and I am desirous this night to show him " a better example."

In the spring of the year 1763, Dr. Goldsmith had

* See Boswell, Vol. III. p. 401. Where will be found a curious account of two fine passages, originally inserted in this novel, afterwards struck out by the author.

† Dr. Percy, the present Bishop of Dromore.

lodgings at Canonbury House, in Islington; and having from the time of his emancipation above mentioned, been much connected with Mr. Newbery, a very liberal and worthy man, he corrected and revised many of his publications, particularly his "Art of Poetry," in two Vols. 12mo. and a "Life of Beau Nash," in 8vo. written soon after the death of that king of Bath. Here also he wrote his "Letters on English History," in two Vols. 12mo. in the assumed character of a nobleman to his son; which have been attributed to Lord Lyttelton, the Earl of Orrery, and other noble authors but were really written by Dr. Goldsmith.

But the production, which he meant should establish his fame, and on which he bestowed his choicest hours, was his admirable poem, "The Traveller," first printed in 1765. While he was composing this with the greatest care, and finishing it in his highest and best manner, he scribbled with all possible dispatch some of the above, and other slight publications for his present subsistance. The life of an author militant is attended with this peculiar circumstance, that he cannot eat his daily bread until he has performed some daily task to procure it. So that for several years, when Goldsmith was composing his most valuable works, in which he displayed the whole powers of his mind, he was at the same time engaged in many inferior publications for immediate support. Thus while he was writing his Inquiry, &c. for Dodsley, he conducted for Wilkie the bookseller, a Lady's Magazine, and joined with some literary associates in a miscellaneous publication, called the "Bee, being essays "on the most interesting subjects," printed for Wilkie, 1759, small 8vo. These first appeared in weekly numbers.

But his best production of this kind was a series of letters in the character of a Chinese philosopher, ori-

ginally published in a periodical paper called "The Ledger," and collected into two volumes, 12mo. printed for Newbery, 1762, entitled, The Citizen of the World. This collection has considerable merit, as many of the papers are distinguished by a display of judgment, wit, or humour.

A selection of his best fugitive pieces, containing also papers from these publications, was afterwards given to the world under the title of "ESSAYS." 1765. 12mo.

Still his early habits of wandering had possession of his mind, and he had not given up his desire of penetrating into the internal parts of Asia. This desire revived, when, soon after the accession of his present Majesty, the Earl of Bute, then prime minister, dispensed in several instances, the royal bounty in pensions and benefactions to men of genius and eminence in literature, a circumstance which ought ever to be remembered to his honour. To Lord Bute, Goldsmith made an application to be allowed a salary, to enable him to execute his favourite plan: and to prepare the way for its success, he drew up that ingenious essay on this subject which was first printed in the Ledger, and afterwards in his Citizen of the World; wherein the expediency and advantages of such a mission are eloquently stated and urged by a great variety of topics. But poor Goldsmith, who had not then published his Traveller, or distinguished his name by any popular display of genius; being obscure and unfriended, was not successful. His petition, or memorial, was unnoticed and neglected*.

* Of this project we have the following account in Boswell.

"Goldsmith had long a visionary project, that some time or other, when his circumstances should be easier, he would go to Aleppo, in order to acquire a knowledge, as far as might be, of any arts peculiar to the East, and introduce

But while this inclination was still predominant, after the application to Lord Bute had failed, an opportunity was thrown in his way of fulfilling his most sanguine expectations. But opportunities he always neglected. His Traveller had procured him the unsolicited friendship of Lord Nugent, afterwards Earl of Clare; who mentioned him favourably to the Earl of Northumberland, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland.

This nobleman, newly returned from Ireland in 1764, invited our poet to an interview; when, from a ludicrous mistake of his excellency's groom of the chambers for himself, he expended on the latter the complimentary address he had prepared for his master: so that when the Lord Lieutenant appeared, his embarrassment was so great, that he came away without being able to explain the object of his wishes.

This Earl (afterwards Duke) of Northumberland, often regretted* that he was not then made acquainted with Dr. Goldsmith's plan and desire to explore the internal regions of Asia; for if he had, he declared he would have procured him a sufficient salary on the Irish establishment, and have had it continued to him during his travels. By such appropriation, his lordship (who was chastely continent in his management of the Irish revenue,) would have considered himself as discharging his duty to that country, in thus patronizing his literary genius.

them into Britain. When this was talked of in Johnson's company, he said, "Of all men Goldsmith is the most unfit to go out upon such an inquiry: for he is utterly ignorant of such arts as we already possess, and consequently could not know what would be accessions to our present stock of mechanical knowledge. Sir, he would bring home a grinding barrow, and think that he had furnished a wonderful improvement." Life of Johnson. Vol. iv. p. 21.

* To the Bishop of Dromore.

Sir John Hawkins, who is always prodigal of his censure, and sparing only of his praise, relates in his life of Johnson, the following anecdote. "Having one day a call to wait on the late Duke, then Earl of Northumberland, I found Goldsmith waiting for an audience in an outer room; I asked him what had brought him there; he told me an invitation from his lordship. I made my business as short as I could, and as a reason, mentioned that Dr. Goldsmith was waiting without. The Earl asked me if I was acquainted with him; I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and staid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out, I asked him the result of his conversation. His lordship, says he, told me he has read my poem, (meaning the Traveller) and was much delighted with it; that he was going Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, and that, hearing that I was a native of that country, he should be glad to do me any kindness. —And what did you answer, asked I, to this gracious offer?—Why, said he, I could say nothing but that I had a brother there a clergyman, that stood in need of help; as, for myself, I have no dependence on the promises of great men; I look to the booksellers for support; they are my best friends, and I am not inclined to forsake them for others."

Sir John, with an unbecoming asperity, which the occasion neither demanded nor could justify, goes on to say, "Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to assist him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himself with the patronage of one nobleman, whose mansion afforded him the delights of a splendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis."

A benevolent mind would see in the recommendation of a brother to the notice and kindness of a patron, something to praise; and Dr. Goldsmith's disregard of himself, if not reconcileable with the dictates of prudence, was certainly disinterested.

Our author afterwards became better known to the Duke; and his ballad of the HERMIT, recommended him to the Dutchess, who was a most generous encourager and patroness of merit; but not till the opportunity was lost of making their protection subservient to his favourite object, which indeed he himself afterwards laid aside.

This illustrious couple annually paid a visit to Bath, and one year on their return, the Dutchess related with great humour the following diverting occurrence of our eccentric bard: On one of the parades at Bath, the Duke and Lord Nugent had hired two adjacent houses. Dr. Goldsmith, who was then resident on a visit with the latter, one morning walked up into the Duke's dining room, as he and the Dutchess were preparing to sit down to breakfast. In a manner the most free and easy he threw himself on a sofa; and, as he was then perfectly known to them both, they inquired of him the Bath news of the day; and, imagining there was some mistake, endeavoured by easy and cheerful conversation to prevent his being too much embarrassed, till breakfast being served up, they invited him to stay and partake of it. Then he awoke from his reverie, declared he thought he had been in the house of his friend, Lord Nugent, and with a confusion which may be imagined, hastily withdrew; but not till they had kindly made him promise to dine with them *. This was not, however,

* Communicated by the Bishop of Dromore, to whom the Dutchess related the incident.

till some years after the period to which we have brought his history.

Dr. Goldsmith had in 1764 fixed his abode in the Temple, wherein he ever afterwards resided; first in the library stair-case; afterwards in the King's Bench Walk, and lastly at No. 2, in Brick Court, where he had chambers on the first stair-case elegantly furnished: and where he was visited by literary friends of the most distinguished merit.

When the club was first proposed and founded by some ingenious men and distinguished writers, which Boswell has denominated the LITERARY CLUB, (though it was a title they never assumed themselves) Goldsmith was one of the first members: and as the Memoirs of this Society inserted by that biographer in his Life of Johnson *, and since by Mr. Malone, in his account of the Life and Writings of Sir Joshua Reynolds †, will admit of some few corrections, we shall here give a more exact history of it, at least from its establishment to the death of Goldsmith; for which we are indebted to an early member‡.

It was first proposed by Sir Joshua Reynolds to Burke and Johnson, and the first members were the friends of these three.

Although it might be originally designed that the number, when complete, should be twelve: yet for the first three or four years it never exceeded nine or ten. It was intended, that if only two of these chanced to meet for the evening, they should be able to entertain each other.

The first members were Sir Joshua Reynolds§, Dr.

* Vol. i. p. 433.

† Vol. i p. xlix. 4to.

‡ The present Bishop of Dromore.

§ Neither he nor Sir John Hawkins had then been knighted, nor had Dr. Johnson then been presented with the doctor-

Johnson, Mr. Burke, Dr. Nugent *, Dr. Goldsmith, Sir John Hawkins, Mr. Langton, Mr. Topham Beauclerk, Mr. Chamier, to whom afterwards was added Mr. Dyer†.

ate, but both here and in other names below, the parties are mentioned by their most usual appellations.

* This gentleman was a physician, father of Mr. Burke's wife; not the Dr. Nugent who published Travels to Mechlinburgh, and several philological works, for whom he has been sometimes mistaken. The above Dr. Nugent was a very amiable man, much respected by Dr. Johnson.

† This gentleman was an intimate friend of Mr. Burke's who inserted in the public papers, the following character of him at the time of his death, which happened on Monday, Sept. 14th, 1772.

"On Monday morning died at his lodgings in Castle Street, "Leicester Fields, Samuel Dyer, Esq. fellow of the Royal "Society. He was a man of profound and general erudition; "and his sagacity and judgment were fully equal to the ex-"tent of his learning. His mind was candid, sincere, bene-"volent: his friendship disinterested and unalterable. The "modesty, simplicity, and sweetness of his manners ren-"dered his conversation as amiable as it was instructive, "and endeared him to those few, who had the happiness "of knowing intimately that valuable unostentious man, and "his death is to them a loss irreparable."

Mr Dyer was held in high estimation for his erudition by Dr. Johnson; as appears from various passages in Mr. Boswell's entertaining work: but we know not of any literary performance in which he was concerned, except that he corrected and improved the Translation of Plutarch's Lives, by Dryden and others, when it was revived by Tonson. An ill-natured, unfounded, and malignant account of this respectable person having appeared in Sir John Hawkin's Life of Dr. Johnson, the literary world are much indebted to the exertions of Mr. Malone, who has pointed out the errors and misrepresentations of Sir John; and, in placing the character of Mr. Dyer in a proper point of view, has done justice to a learned, virtuous, and amiable man.—See Malone's Life of Dryden, p. 181.

They met and supped together every Friday evening at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard Street, Soho; and are said by Boswell to have commenced their meetings in 1764, but the gentleman who contributed this account, thinks it was not quite so early.

At the beginning of the year 1768, the number of the attending or efficient members was reduced to EIGHT; for Mr. Beauclerk, who had been attracted by more fashionable clubs, had for some time past forsaken this; and Sir John Hawkins, having offended the company by some disrespectful treatment of Burke, sent a letter to excuse his future attendance, as being inconsistent with the early hours adopted in his family.

Upon this the club agreed to elect a supply of new members, and to increase their number to twelve. Of which every new member was to be elected by ballot, and one black ball was sufficient for exclusion.

Mr. Beauclerk then desired to be restored to the Society, and the following three new members were introduced on Monday evening, February 15th, 1768. Sir Robert Chambers, Dr. Percy, and the late George Colman.

The club continued its regular meetings every Monday evening till December, 1772, when it was altered to Friday evening: and two vacancies having been occasioned by deaths, they were supplied on March 12, 1773, by the earl of Charlemont and David Garrick. Two other such vacancies occurring soon after, they were filled on April 2d, by Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones, and on April 30th by Mr. Boswell, both in 1773. The number was still limited to TWELVE.

On Friday, March 4th, 1774, three new members were added to the club, viz. the Hon. Charles Fox,

Sir Charles Bunbury, and Dr. George Fordyce: and the same evening was elected George Steevens, Esq.

These are believed to be pretty exact annals of the club down to the death of Dr. Goldsmith; but either then, or soon after, the number was increased to thirty; and in 1775, instead of supping once a week, they resolved to dine together once a fortnight during the sitting of Parliament: and now they dine every other Tuesday, at Parsloe's, in St. James'-street.

The number has been gradually increased to thirty-five, and is at present limited to forty *.

* The following LIST is believed to contain the names of all that had been Members of this Club in 1797.

Lord Ashburton, *dec.*
Sir Joseph Banks, K. B.
The Marquis of Bath, *dec.*
Dr. Barnard, Bishop of Limerick,
Mr. Topham Beauclerk, *dec.*
Sir Charles Blagden,
Mr. Boswell, *dec.*
Sir Charles Bunbury,
Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, *dec.*
Richard Burke, (his son) *dec.*
Dr. Burney,
Sir Robert Chambers, *dec.*
Mr. Chamier, *dec.*
The Earl of Charlemont, *dec.*
George Colman, *dec.*
Mr. Courtenay,
Dr. Douglas, Bishop of Salisbury,
Mr. Dyer, *dec.*
Lord Elliot, *dec.*
Rev. Dr. Farmer, *dec.*
Dr. George Fordyce, *dec.*
Rt. Hon. Charles Fox,
David Garrick, Esq. *dec.*
Mr. Gibbon, *dec.*
Dr. Goldsmith, *dec.*
Sir Wm. Hamilton, K. B. *dec.*
Sir John Hawkins, *dec.*
Dr. Hinchliffe, Bishop of Peterborough, *dec.*
Dr. Johnson, *dec.*
Sir Wm. Jones, *dec.*
Mr. Langton, *dec.*
The Duke of Leeds, *dec.*
Earl Lucan, *dec.*
Earl M'Cartney,
Mr. Malone,
Dr. Marlay, Bishop of Waterford, *dec.*
Dr. Nugent, *dec.*
Hon. Frederick North,
The Earl of Upper Ossory,
Visc. Palmerston,
Dr. Percy, Bish. of Dromore,
Major Rennel,
Sir Joshua Reynolds, *dec.*
Sir Wm. Scott,
Mr. R B. Sheridan,
Dr. Shipley, Bishop of St. Asaph, *dec.*
Dr. Adam Smith, *dec.*

In the year 1765, Dr. Goldsmith printed his beautiful ballad of the HERMIT; which he at first inscribed to the Countess of Northumberland, who had shown a partiality for poems of this kind, by patronizing the "Reliques of Ancient English Poetry," published in the same year. In that collection is a little tale, intitled, "The Friar of Orders Grey;" in which the circumstances of the story bearing some resemblance to those in Goldsmith's Hermit, the Doctor, who was always in a state of war with the inferior scribblers, was afterwards taxed with having taken his ballad from that in the Reliques. On this he published a letter in the St. James's Chronicle, June, 1767*, wherein he justly vindicated the priority of his own poem; but in asserting that the plan of the other was taken from his, (in nothing else have they the most distant resemblance,) and in reporting the conversation on this subject, his memory must have failed him; for the story in them both was evidently taken from a very ancient ballad in that collection, beginning thus, "Gentle Heardsman," &c. (Vol. II. No. 14,) as any one will be convinced who will but compare them. This Dr. Goldsmith had seen and admired long before it was printed, and how well he had imitated some parts of it, will appear by examining the following stanzas:

FROM THE OLD BALLAD.

And grew soe coy and nice to please,
As women's lookes are often soe,

Earl Spencer,
Mr. George Steevens, *dec.*
Mr. Agmemdesham Vesey, *dec.*
Dr. Warren, *dec.*
Rev. Dr. Joseph Warton, *dec.*
Rev. Thomas Warton, *dec.*
Rt. Hon. W. Windham.

* This may be seen prefixed to the ballad in this edition, vol. ii.

He might not kisse, nor hand forscothe,
Unless I willed him so to doe.

Thus being wearyed with delayes,
To see I pittyed not his greeffe,
He gott him to a secrett place,
And there he dyed without releeffe.

And for his sake these weeds I weare,
And sacrifice my tender age :
And every day I'll beg my bread,
To undergoe this pilgrimage.

Thus every day I fast and pray,
And ever will doe till I die ;
And gett me to some secret place,
For soe did hee, and soe will I.

FROM THE HERMIT.

For still I try'd each fickle art,
Importunate and vain ;
And while his passion touch'd my heart,
I triumph'd in his pain.

Till quite dejected by my scorn,
He left me to my pride ;
And sought a solitude forlorn,
In secret, where he dy'd.

But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
And well my life shall pay ;
I'll seek the solitude he sought,
And stretch me where he lay.

And there forlorn, despairing hid,
I'll lay me down and die :
'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
And so for him will I.

The edition of the Hermit given in these volumes, contains an additional stanza * never before printed ;

* It is now the thirtieth stanza, beginning thus—
And when beside me, &c.

for which the reader is indebted to Richard Archdal, Esq. late a member of the Irish parliament, to whom it was presented by the author himself.

From Dr. Goldsmith's success as a critic, a novelist, and a moral poet, he was afterwards encouraged to court the Dramatic Muse, and he composed his comedy, "The Good-Natured Man." This he first offered to Garrick, who, after a long fluctuation between doubt and encouragement, with his usual uncertainty, at length declined receiving it for his theatre of Drury-lane; and it was at last produced at Covent-Garden, where it was represented for the first time, January 29, 1768. It kept possession of the stage for nine nights, but was not judged by the author's friends, to have had all the success it deserved. Boswell relates, that Johnson praised Goldsmith's "Good-Natured Man," and said it was the best comedy that had appeared since "The Provoked Husband;" and that there had not been of late any such character exhibited on the stage as Croaker. I observed, continues Boswell, it was the Suspirious of his Rambler. He said, Goldsmith had owned he had borrowed it from thence *.

But while he was composing this comedy, and preparing afterwards to take a more successful flight in his fine poem of "The Deserted Village," which was published in 1769, he wrote for present support at the instance of the booksellers, and for the instruction chiefly of young readers, a series of histories, which he never considered as conducive to his fame. These were, his "Roman History," in two vols. 8vo, chiefly compiled from Livy; and afterwards an

* Life of Johnson. Vol. II. p. 48.

"Abridgment" of it in one volume, 12mo. * both printed for Thomas Davies. For whom he also compiled a "History of England," in 4 vols. 8vo. * which performance, like the preceding, although elegantly written, and highly calculated to attract and interest young readers, enters into no critical discussion of disputed points; and is often superficial and inaccurate.

* It may gratify the curiosity of the Reader, to see the articles of agreement concerning these last two publications, which were drawn up by Dr. Goldsmith himself.

"MEMORANDUM.

Russel-street, Covent-Garden.

"It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. on the "one hand, and Thomas Davies, bookseller, of Russel-"street, Covent-Garden, on the other, that Oliver Goldsmith "shall write for Thomas Davies, an History of England, "from the birth of the British empire, to the death of George "the Second, in four volumes, octavo, of the size and the "letter of the Roman History, written by Oliver Goldsmith. "The said History of England shall be written and compil-"ed in the space of two years from the date hereof. And "when the said history is written and delivered in manu-"script, the printer giving his opinion that the quantity "above-mentioned is completed, that then Oliver Goldsmith "shall be paid by Thomas Davies the sum of five hundred "pounds sterling, for having written and compiled the same. "It is agreed also, that Oliver Goldsmith shall print his "name to the said work. In witness whereof we have set "our names, this thirteenth of June, 1769.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.
"THOMAS DAVIES."

"MEMORANDUM.

"September 15, 1770.

"It is agreed between Oliver Goldsmith, M. B. and Thomas "Davies, of Covent-Garden, bookseller, that Oliver Gold-"smith shall abridge for Thomas Davies the book entitled

Of this we have a striking instance in his account of one of the most remarkable occurrences in the history of his own country, to which he might have been expected to have been most attentive. This was the celebrated siege of Londonderry, in 1689, sustained for 104 days against a numerous and cruel French army, after that city had been abandoned by the military commanders, as utterly untenable, and not furnished with provisions for more than ten days: but Providence had raised them up a heaven-taught general, the Rev. George Walker, a clergyman, who had chanced to take refuge in that city; and who, with the assistance of one or two officers, accidentally there, conducted their defence with such admirable courage, skill, and judgment, and was so well seconded by the persevering valour, fortitude, and patience of the poor destitute inhabitants, that they finally saved the city, and thereby in effect, as was then judged, the whole kingdom.

This extraordinary man is slightly mentioned by Goldsmith, as "one Walker a dissenting minister:" for which he received a proper reproof in the following letter.

"Goldsmith's Roman History, in two volumes 8vo. into one "volume in 12mo. so as to fit it for the use of such as will not "be at the expense of that in 8vo. For the abridging of the "said History, and for putting his name thereto, said Tho- "mas Davies shall pay Oliver Goldsmith fifty guineas, to be "paid him on the abridgment and delivery of the copy; as "witness our hands.

"OLIVER GOLDSMITH.
"THOMAS DAVIES."

Since Dr. Goldsmith's death, "an Abridgment of the "History of Greece," hath been published under his name, in which his friends believe he had no concern, though it is possible he may have intended a compilation on that subject.

TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

SIR,

I BEG leave to acquaint you, there is a mistake in your Abridgment of the History of England, respecting Dr. Walker, viz. 'one Walker, a dissenting minister.'

I venture to assure you, Mr. Walker was a clergyman of the established church of Ireland, that was appointed Bishop of Dromore by King William, for his services at Derry; but was unfortunately killed at the battle of the Boyne;—which I hope you will be pleased to insert in the future editions of your late book.

The Duke of Schomberg was certainly killed in passing the river Boyne. I am, Sir, with great respect,

Your most obedient humble servant,

THOMAS WOOLSEY.

Dundalk, April 10, 1772.

Had this ecclesiastic been, as Goldsmith supposed, a dissenting minister, he ought not to have passed over with so little notice a man, of whatever profession, who had been the instrument of saving so many lives and a whole city from destruction. But it was the fate of Walker to be considered with almost as little attention by king William himself, to whose cause he had afforded such important assistance. For when the king heard he was killed in the field of battle, he asked with true Batavian sang froid, "What "business had he there?" But his Majesty should have considered, that although Mr. Walker wore a black coat and not a red one, he had shown great skill and courage in one of the most arduous services in

war; that he had displayed a very superior genius for military command, and had been led by a natural and allowable curiosity to view the conduct of a battle under so distinguished a commander, and to examine critically a subject, in one branch of which he had shown himself so great a master*.

Besides his regular histories, of which Dr. Johnson thought very favourably †, Goldsmith had all the other business of an author by profession: he wrote introductions and prefaces to the books and compilations of other writers; many of which have never come to our notice, but such as have occurred will be inserted in this collection. They all exhibit ingenious proofs of his talents as a composer, and generally give a better display of the subjects than could have been done by their own authors. But herein he is rather to be considered as an advocate pleading the cause of another, than delivering his own sentiments, for he often recommends the peculiarities, if not the defects of a work; which, if his pen were engaged on the other side, he would with equal ability and eloquence detect. The reader will find something like this in an address to the public, which was to usher in proposals (dated March 1, 1764) for "A New History of the World "from the Creation to the present Time. By Wil-"liam Guthrie, Esq. &c. in 12 volumes, 8vo. to be

* A curious journal, which he had kept of all that passed during the siege, was published at that time in 4to. and republished by the late Dr. Brown, author of the Estimate, &c.

One very remarkable providence happened to the besieged, who, being reduced by extremest famine to eat unwholesome food, were dying fast of the bloody flux: when accidentally discovering some concealed barrels of starch and tallow; had thereby their hunger not only relieved, but were cured of their dysentery.

† Boswell. Vol. ii. p. 234.

" printed for Newbery, &c." This was to be an abridgment of all the volumes of the ancient and modern universal histories: and he urges a great variety of topics in praise of such contracting and condensing histories as the present subject required; which with equal ingenuity he could have opposed and confuted. But the whole is excellent as a composition. In the preceding year, he drew up a Preface or Introduction to Dr. Brooks's " System of Natural History," 1763, in 6 vols. 12mo. a very dull and uninteresting work; but in this preface he gave such an admirable display of the subject, which he rendered so extremely interesting and captivating, that both himself and the booksellers were induced by it to engage him in his larger work of the " History of the Earth and " Animated Nature." This, although finely written, is full of mistakes and defects, from which this preliminary essay or prospectus of the subject is entirely free: of this work Dr. Johnson said, ' He is now writing a Natural History, and will make it as entertaining as a Persian tale*.'

He also drew up a " Life of Parnell," to be prefixed to an edition of his poems, in which the want of incidents in the private life of a scholar, is very ingeniously supplied by the biographer's reflections.

Johnson, in his Lives of the Poets, says, ' The life of Dr. Parnell is a task which I should very willingly decline, since it has lately been written by Goldsmith, a man of such variety of powers, and such felicity of performance, that he always seemed to do best that which he was doing; a man who had the art of being minute without tediousness, and general without confusion: whose language was copious without exuberance, exact without constraint, and easy without weakness

* Boswell's Life. Vol. ii. p. 236.

'What such an author told, who would tell again? I have made an abstract from his larger narration: and have this gratification from my attempt, that it gives me an opportunity of paying due tribute to the memory of Goldsmith.'

Το γαρ γερας εστι θανοντων.

In another of his undertakings for the trade, he was not so successful; for, being desired by Griffin the bookseller to make a selection of elegant poems from our best English classics, for the use of boarding schools, and to prefix to it one of his captivating prefaces; he carelessly, without reading it, marked for the printer one of the most indecent tales of Prior. This, as might be supposed, prevented the sale of the book, which had been printed in two vols. 12mo. Of this production the late ingenious Mr. Headley says, 'Dr. Goldsmith, who was only unhappy amidst all the works he undertook in his Beauties of English Poetry, disgraced himself by a very superficial and hasty publication of this kind.'

Our author wrote also the life of Lord Bolingbroke, which he prefixed to the Dissertations on Parties, which was printed for T. Davies, in 1771, and again in the year 1775, with Goldsmith's name affixed to it;—it is also inserted in the large edition of Bolingbroke's works, which appeared in the year 1777.

We are not sure that we have mentioned the preceding publications in their regular order, and have doubtless omitted many similar pieces, as well as occasional contributions to periodical works.

But his admirable poem, "The Deserted Village," published in 1769, atoned for every defect or mistake of the author: who frequently looked back with regret on those sacrifices to necessity. It has been said by former biographers, that, having received for the

copy of his poem a note for one hundred guineas from the bookseller, and one of his acquaintances observing to him, that it was a great sum for so short a performance, he went and returned the note. But although this would have been perfectly in character, the doctor was not quite so ignorant of the value of his own time and labour ; and it is well known from the severe corrections and high finishing which he bestowed on that and his former ethic poem, that each of them had cost him more time than many of his compilations, for which he demanded a larger price than the sum above-mentioned.

At the establishment of the Royal Academy of Painting, his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds had procured for him the appointment of Professor of Ancient History; a mere complimentary distinction, attended neither with emolument nor trouble, but which gave him a respectable seat at their occasional meetings, and what perhaps was better, at their annual dinner. The following letter shows the proper sense he had of this distinction, and displays also the benevolence of his heart, and his kind regard for his family.

TO

MR. MAURICE GOLDSMITH*,

AT JAMES LAWDER'S, ESQ. AT KILMORE, NEAR CARICK ON SHANNON.

January, 1770.

DEAR BROTHER,

I should have answered your letter sooner, but in truth I am not fond of thinking of the necessi-

* This was our poet's youngest brother. Having been bred to no business, he upon some occasion complained to our

ties of those I love, when it is so very little in my power to help them. I am sorry to find you are still every way unprovided for; and what adds to my uneasiness is, that I have received a letter from my sister Johnson*, by which I learn that she is pretty much in the same circumstances. As to myself, I believe I could get both you and my poor brother-in-law something like that which you desire, but I am determined never to ask for little things, nor exhaust any little interest I may have, until I can serve you, him, and myself, more effectually. As yet no opportunity has offered, but I believe you are pretty well convinced, that I will not be remiss when it arrives. The king has lately been pleased to make me Professor of Ancient History in a Royal Academy of Painting, which he has just established, but there is no salary annexed; and I took it rather as a compliment to the institution than any benefit to myself. Honours to one in my situation are something like ruffles to a man that wants a shirt. You tell me that

bard, that he found it difficult to live like a gentleman. On which Oliver begged he would, without delay, quit so unprofitable a trade, and betake himself to some handicraft employment. Maurice wisely took the hint, and bound himself apprentice to a cabinet-maker. He had a shop in Dublin, when the Duke of Rutland was Lord Lieutenant; who, at the instance of Mr. Orde, then principal secretary of state, (now Lord Bolton,) out of regard to his brother's memory, made him an inspector of the licenses in that city. He was also appointed mace-bearer on the erection of the Royal Irish Academy; both of them places very compatible with his business. In the former he gave proof of great integrity by detecting a fraud committed on the revenue in his department, by which probably he might himself have profited, if he had not been a man of principle. He died without issue, about seven years ago.

* His youngest sister, who had married unfortunately.

there are fourteen or fifteen pounds left me in the hands of my cousin Lawder, and you ask me what I would have done with them. My dear brother, I would by no means give any directions to my dear worthy relations at Kilmore, how to dispose of money, which is, properly speaking, more theirs than mine. All that I can say is, that I entirely, and this letter will serve to witness, give up any right and title to it; and I am sure they will dispose of it to the best advantage. To them I entirely leave it, whether they or you may think the whole necessary to fit you out, or whether our poor sister Johnson may not want the half, I leave entirely to their and your discretion. The kindness of that good couple to our poor shattered family, demands our sincerest gratitude, and though they have almost forgot me, yet, if good things at last arrive, I hope one day to return, and increase their good humour by adding to my own. I have sent my cousin Jenny a miniature picture of myself, as I believe it is the most acceptable present I can offer. I have ordered it to be left for her at George Faulkenor's, folded in a letter. The face you well know, is ugly enough, but it is finely painted. I will shortly also send my friends over the Shannon some metzotinto prints of myself, and some more of my friends here, such as Burke, Johnson, Reynolds, and Colman. I believe I have written an hundred letters to different friends in your country, and never received an answer from any of them. I do not know how to account for this, or why they are unwilling to keep up for me these regards, which I must ever retain for them. If then you have a mind to oblige me, you will write often, whether I answer you or not. Let me particularly have the news of our famil and old acquaintances. For instance, you may begin by telling me about the family where you reside, how they spend their

time, and whether they ever make mention of me. Tell me about my mother, my brother Hodson and his son; my brother Harry's son and daughter, my sister Johnson, the family of Ballyoughter, what is become of them, where they live, and how they do. You talked of being my only brother, I don't understand you—Where is Charles? A sheet of paper occasionally filled with news of this kind, would make me very happy, and would keep you nearer my mind. As it is, my dear brother, believe me to be your's, most affectionately,

OLIVER GOLDSMITH *.

The following letter, though without a date, is believed to have been written in the same year, 1770, when he accompanied a party of ladies to Paris. The humour displayed in this short billet, hastily written on his landing at Calais, makes us regret that he did not continue the correspondence during the remainder of this journey, and the whole time of his continuance in France.

TO SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

WE had a very quick passage from Dover to Calais, which we performed in three hours and twenty minutes, all of us extremely sea-sick, which must necessarily have happened, as my machine to prevent sea-sickness was not completed. We were glad to leave Dover, because we hated to be imposed upon; so were in high spirits at coming to Calais, where we were told, that a little money would go a great way. Upon landing two little trunks, which

* To the original is annexed a receipt, which shows the sum of 15l. was paid to Maurice Goldsmith, for a legacy bequeathed to Oliver Goldsmith by the late Rev. Thomas Contarine. Dated 4th Feb. 1770.

was all we carried with us, we were surprised to see fourteen or fifteen fellows all running down to the ship to lay their hands upon them; four got under each trunk, the rest surrounded, and held the hasps; and in this manner our little baggage was conducted, with a kind of funeral solemnity, till it was safely lodged at the custom-house. We were well enough pleased with the people's civility, till they came to be paid: every creature that had the happiness of but touching our trunks with their finger, expected six-pence; and they had so pretty civil a manner of demanding it, that there was no refusing them. When we had done with the porters, we had next to speak with the custom-house officers, who had their pretty civil way too. We were directed to the Hotel d'Angleterre, where a valet de place came to offer his service: and spoke to me ten minutes before I once found out that he was speaking English. We had no occasion for his service, so we gave him a little money because he spoke English, and because he wanted it. I cannot help mentioning another circumstance; I bought a ribbon for my new wig at Canterbury, and the barber at Calais broke it in order to gain six-pence by buying me a new one.

In the following year our author had received a very obliging invitation from Bennet Langton, Esq. and his lady, the Countess of Rothes, to spend some part of the autumn with them at their seat in Lincolnshire, claiming at the same time a promise from Sir Joshua Reynolds to pay them a visit along with Goldsmith. The following answer, published by Mr. Langton's permission, gives us a very satisfactory account how our author was employed at that time, and some interesting particulars of others of their friends.

TO BENNET LANGTON, Esq.

AT LANGTON, NEAR SPILSBY, IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

My dear Sir,

SINCE I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I have been almost wholly in the country at a farmer's house, quite alone, trying to write a comedy. It is now finished, but when or how it will be acted, or whether it will be acted at all, are questions I cannot resolve. I am therefore so much employed upon that, that I am under the necessity of putting off my intended visit to Lincolnshire for this season. Reynolds is just returned from Paris, and finds himself now in the case of a truant that must make up for his idle time by diligence. We have therefore agreed to postpone our journey till next summer, when we hope to have the honour of waiting upon Lady Rothes, and you, and staying double the time of our late intended visit. We often meet, and never without remembering you. I see Mr. Beauclerc very often both in town and country. He is now going directly forward to become a second Boyle: deep in chymistry and physics. Johnson has been down upon a visit to a country parson, Doctor Taylor: and is returned to his old haunts at Mrs. Thrale's. Burke is a farmer, *en attendant*, a better place; but visiting about too. Every soul is a visiting about and merry but myself. And that is hard too, as I have been trying these three months to do something to make people laugh. There have I been strolling about the hedges, studying jests with a most tragical countenance. The Natural History is about half finished, and I will shortly finish the rest. God knows I am tired of this kind of finishing, which is but bungling work; and that not so much my fault as the fault of my scurvy circumstances. They be-

gin to talk in town of the Opposition's gaining ground; the cry of liberty is still as loud as ever. I have published, or Davies has published for me, an Abridgment of the History of England, for which I have been a good deal abused in the news-papers for betraying the liberties of the people. God knows I had no thought for or against liberty in my head; my whole aim being to make up a book of a decent size, that, as 'Squire Richard says, would do no harm to nobody. However, they set me down as an arrant tory, and consequently an honest man. When you come to look at any part of it, you'll say that I am a sour Whig. God bless you, and with my most respectful compliments to her ladyship, I remain, dear Sir,

Your most affectionate
Humble Servant,
OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Temple.
Brick Court,
Sept. 7, 1771.

But it was not only from his intimate friends that Dr. Goldsmith received epistolary addresses; the celebrity of his writings, and the opinion of his benevolence, attracted to him attention and regard from all quarters. Among the multitude of letters that were sent him, we shall select the following from two remarkable characters; but as opposite as can be found between a friend and an enemy of the human race; the one distinguished for the most exalted application, the other for the vilest abuse, of singular talents: both intimately connected with the history of America, where the one had founded a flourishing colony, the other hath endeavoured to poison and corrupt all the colonies. Not to keep the reader longer in suspense, these are two letters from the venerable

General Oglethorp, the founder of Georgia; and the notorious Thomas Paine, then an officer of the excise, whose claim therein to singular modesty will divert the reader

FROM GENERAL OGLETHORP.

HOW just, Sir, were your observations, that the poorest objects were by extreme poverty deprived of the benefit of hospitals erected for the relief of the poorest.

Extreme poverty, which should be the strongest recommendation to charity, is here the insurmountable objection which leaves the distressed to perish.

The qualifying such objects to receive the benefit of hospitals answers the intentions of the intended society. The design is the immediate relief from perishing; thereby giving time and protection to get proper destinations. And this of being admitted into an hospital is a proper destination.

You were so good as to offer to distribute such sums as should be sent to you.

At the same time that I am to return you thanks for your charitable offer, I am to send you five pounds to be distributed for that purpose, in the time and manner you think proper. Which I accordingly herewith send.

You have seen, I suppose, in the St. James's Evening Post, from Sept. 22 to 25, the Zoilus, that attacked you, treated with proper contempt.

If a farm and a mere country scene will be a little refreshment from the smoke of London, we shall be glad of the happiness of seeing you at Cranham Hall. It is sixteen miles from the Three Nuns at Whitechapel, where Prior our stage coach [man] inns. He sets out at two in the afternoon. I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble Servant

Cranham Hall, J. OGLETHORP.

(By Gray's Bag) Essex.—No Date.

FROM THOMAS PAINE.

HONOURED SIR,

HEREWITH I present you with the case of the officers of excise. A compliment of this kind from an entire stranger may appear somewhat singular: but the following reasons and information will I presume sufficiently apologize.

I act myself in the humble station of an officer of excise, though somewhat differently circumstanced to what many of them are, and have been the principal promoter of a plan for applying to Parliament this session for an increase of salary. A petition for this purpose has been circulated through every part of the kingdom, and signed by all the officers therein. A subscription of three shillings per officer is raised, amounting to upwards of five hundred pounds, for supporting the expenses.

The excise officers in all cities and corporate towns have obtained letters of recommendation from the electors to the members in their behalf; many or most of whom have promised their support. The enclosed case we have presented to most of the members, and shall to all, before the petition appears in the house.

The memorial before you met with so much approbation while in manuscript, that I was advised to print four thousand copies: three thousand of which were subscribed for by the officers in general, and the remaining one thousand reserved for presents.

Since the delivering them, I have received so many letters of thanks and approbation for the performance, that were I not rather singularly modest, I should insensibly become a little vain.

The literary fame of Dr. Goldsmith has induced me to present one to him, such as it is. 'Tis my first and only attempt, and even now I should not have un-

dertaken it, had I not been particularly applied to by some of my superiors in office.

I have some few questions to trouble Dr. Goldsmith with, and should esteem his company for an hour or two, to partake of a bottle of wine or any thing else, and apologize for this trouble, as a singular favour conferred on

His unknown
Humble Servant,
and Admirer,
THOMAS PAINE.

Excise Coffee-House,
Broad-street,
December 21, 1772.

P. S. Shall take the liberty of waiting on you in a day or two.

In the preceding pages we have not retailed every story which had been inserted in former accounts of our poet's life, expressive of his disinterested and generous simplicity, or of the facility with which he was the dupe of fraudulent artifice. Many instances of both might be produced, but some of those formerly printed we do not believe to be genuine. Certain, however, it is, that there never were a heart and purse so open to the calls of pity, and the applications of distress, whether real or pretended, as Dr. Goldsmith's. Great, therefore, was the number of solicitations continually made to him, and always with success. Emigrants from his own country, and especially the poor scribblers from it, constantly lived upon him; but indeed, adventurers from all countries found access to him, and emptied his pockets. I shall mention a few instances.

Very soon after Dr. Goldsmith first settled as a physician in London, the noted John Carteret Pilking-

ton found him out, and one day came to him with earnest solicitations to lend him a few guineas, which he said would perhaps enable him to make his fortune. He mentioned a great lady, perhaps the late Dutchess of Portland, who, he said, extended her favour and protection to all that could supply her with rare and uncommon animals; that he had got a white mouse to present to her Grace, but was destitute of clothes fit to appear before her. Poor Goldsmith swallowed the tale, but in those early days was himself without money: Pilkington easily surmounted that difficulty, by proposing to the doctor to let him pawn his watch, and actually prevailed. But from that time he heard no more of his watch, the white mouse, or Mr. Pilkington.

Some years after, when the Doctor had gained admission into better company, there was a foreigner in London, a Colonel Chevalier de Champigny, (so he intitled himself,) who, having obtained some countenance from the Bavarian ambassador, raised contributions among our nobility by soliciting subscriptions of seven guineas and a half, to be paid before-hand, for a History of England, in 15 volumes, which he was to write in French. Even this adventurer introduced himself to our simple and credulous poet, and got his full subscription of seven guineas and a half, when he probably had not another left in his pocket.

We shall mention one other instance which had a more serious issue. A native of his own country, of the name of Griffin, who had been educated in some foreign seminary, whence he had fled to England, attacked at once Garrick and Goldsmith; the former in a poetical eloge of the most extravagant praise, and the latter in letters, pointing out the most affecting distress. He desired Goldsmith, as his countryman, to intercede for him with the celebrated dramatist;

which he generously did: though the writer of this, who hath perused both the verses and the letters, saw no attempt to flatter Goldsmith, or to interest him otherwise than through his compassion. They concurred, however, in their endeavours to serve him, and at his earnest request, recommended him to be a teacher in an Academy: he had not been long in this situation, before he robbed the house and made his escape.

On the 15th March, 1773, Dr. Goldsmith's second comedy, "The Mistakes of a Night, or She Stoops "to Conquer*," made its appearance at Covent-Garden, where it was not admitted by Mr. Colman without some difficulty, and even much and urgent solicitation of their common friends. But it was received by the audience with the highest applause, contrary to the expectation of the manager. For what is called sentimental comedy had at that time such entire possession of the stage, that Mr. Colman had almost despaired of its success, even to the end of the first representation. So that when the author, towards the conclusion, happened to express some little doubt whether one of the sallies of Tony Lumpkin would be relished by the audience, the Manager replied, "Psha, my dear Doctor, do not be fearful of squibs, when we have been sitting almost these two hours on a barrel of gunpowder."

In a letter to Boswell, written in the year 1773, Dr. Johnson says, 'Dr. Goldsmith has a new Comedy which is expected in the spring. No name is yet given it. The chief diversion arises from a stratagem by which a lover is made to mistake his future father-in-law's house for an inn. This, you see, borders up-

* He had at first intended to intitle it, "The Old House a "New Inn."

on farce. The dialogue is quick and gay, and the incidents are so prepared as not to seem improbable*.'

On another occasion Dr. Johnson declared, 'That he knew of no comedy for many years that has so much exhilarated an audience, that has answered so much the great end of comedy—making an audience merry†'.

This comedy was very successful, and afterwards kept possession of the stage as a stock play. It added very much to the author's reputation, and, as was usual with Dr. Goldsmith, brought down upon him a torrent of congratulatory addresses and petitions from less fortunate bards, whose indigence compelled them to solicit his bounty, and of scurrilous abuse from such of them, as being less reduced, only envied his success. We shall produce an instance of each.

ON DR. GOLDSMITH's COMEDY

"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."

Quite sick in her bed Thalia was laid,
A sentiment puke had quite kill'd the sweet maid,
Her bright eyes lost all of their fire:
When a regular Doctor, one Goldsmith by name,
Found out her disorder as soon as he came,
And has made her (for ever 'twill crown all his fame)
As lively as one can desire.

Oh! Doctor, assist a poor bard who lies ill,
Without e'er a nurse, e'er a potion or pill;
From your kindness he hopes for some ease.
You're a GOOD-NATUR'D MAN all the world does allow,
O would your good-nature but shine forth just now,
In a manner—I'm sure your good sense will tell how,
Your servant most humbly 'twould please.

* Boswell's Life of Johnson. vol. ii. p. 205.
† Ibid. Vol. ii. p. 232.

The bearer is the author's wife, and an answer from Dr. Goldsmith by her, will be ever gratefully acknowledged by his

Humble Servant,

JOHN OAKMAM.

Orange Court; Swallow street, Carnaby Market.

Saturday, March 27, 1773.

The other was an attempt to check our Author's triumph, on the ninth night of the representation, and was inserted in the London Packet of Wednesday evening, March 24th, 1773, printed for T. Evans, in Paternoster Row *. As our successful bard, we can

* Unwilling to defile our text with this scurrilous production, we have introduced it in a note.

FROM THE LONDON PACKET.

TO DR. GOLDSMITH.

Vous vous noyez par vanitè.

SIR,

THE happy knack which you have learnt of puffing your own compositions provokes me to come forth. You have not been the editor of newspapers and magazines, not to discover the trick of literary *humbug*. But the gauze is so thin, that the very foolish part of the world see through it, and discover the doctor's monkey face and cloven foot. Your poetic vanity, is as unpardonable as your personal; would man believe it, and will woman bear it, to be told, that for hours the *great* Goldsmith will stand surveying his grotesque Oranhotan's figure in a pier glass: Was but the lovely H——k as much enamoured, you would not sigh, my gentle swain, in vain. But your vanity is preposterous. How will this same bard of Bedlam ring the changes in the praise of Goldy! But what has he to be either proud or vain of? The Traveller is

scarcely suppose, could be much elevated by the panegyrical strains or addresses of his supplicatory adulators; so doubtless he would have treated the base scurrility of his envious detractors with equal disregard or contempt, but for the officious kindness of one of those good friends, who are so obliging as to take care that nothing disagreeable shall escape the notice of the aggrieved party. The offensive publication was very eagerly brought to him by a friend of this stamp, who is believed to have been one of his own countrymen, an officer in the army, who thought he could not confer on him a greater favour, than by engaging him in a quarrel.

Among his papers has been found the following unfinished relation of the adventure, dictated to an amanuensis; for the poor doctor's hand was too much bruised to hold a pen.

"As I find the public have been informed by the "newspapers of a slight fray which happened be-

a flimsy poem, built upon false principles; principles diametrically opposite to liberty. What is the Good-natured Man, but a poor, water-gruel, dramatic dose? What is the Deserted Village, but a *pretty* poem, of easy numbers, without fancy, dignity, genius, or fire? And pray what may be the last *speaking pantomime*, so praised by the doctor himself, but an incoherent piece of stuff, the figure of a woman, with a fish's tail, without plot, incident, or intrigue? We are made to laugh at stale, dull jokes, wherein we mistake pleasantry for wit, and grimace for humour; wherein every scene is unnatural, and inconsistent with the rules, the laws of nature, and of drama, viz. Two gentlemen come to a man of fortune's house, eat, drink, sleep, &c. and take it for an inn. The one is intended as a lover to the daughter; he talks with her for some hours, and when he sees her again in a different dress, he treats her as a bar-girl, and swears she squinted. He abuses the master of the house, and threatens to kick him out of his own doors. The Squire, whom we are told is to be a fool, proves the most sensible being of the piece; and

"tween me and the editor of an evening paper; to "prevent their being imposed upon, the account is "shortly this.

"A friend of mine came on Friday to inform me "that a paragraph was inserted against me in the "London Packet, which I was in honour bound to re-"sent. I read the paper, and considered it in the "same light as he did. I went to the editor, and "struck him with my cane on the back. A scuffle "ensued." * * *

The editor alleged, that Dr. Goldsmith came into his shop, and thus accosted him. "You have publish-"ed a thing in your paper, (my name is Goldsmith,) "reflecting upon a young lady. As for myself I do "not mind it." The publisher, who was probably as unconscious of the mischief to which he was instrumental, as the horse, that draws the artillery, is of the

he makes out a whole act, by bidding his mother lie close behind a bush, persuading her that his father, her own husband, is a highwayman, and that he is come to cut their throats; and to give his cousin an opportunity to go off, he drives his mother over hedges, ditches, and through ponds. There is not, sweet sucking Johnson, a natural stroke in the whole play, but the young fellow's giving the stolen jewels to the mother, supposing her to be the landlady. That Mr. Colman did no justice to this piece, I honestly allow; that he told all his friends it would be damned, I positively aver; and from such ungenerous insinuations, without a dramatic merit, it rose to public notice: and it is now the *ton* to go to see it; though I never saw a person that either liked it or approved it, any more than the absurd plot *of the Home's* tragedy of *Alonzo*. Mr. Goldsmith, correct your arrogance! reduce your vanity; and endeavour to believe, as a man, you are of the plainest sort; and as an author, but a mortal piece of mediocrity.

Brise le miroir infidele
Qui vous cache la vérité.

TOM TICKLE.

havoc it makes; stooped down to look behind his counter for the paper complained of. When our poet's friend pointed to the man's back, as presenting a fair mark for his cane, which he exercised upon it without mercy; and, as he says, "a scuffle ensued," wherein the Doctor himself got his share of blows, while his military friend, with great *sang froid*, stood looking on. Nor is it easy to guess how it might have ended, when Dr. Kenrick, a noted libeller, who was believed to be the author of the scurrilous letter, and was all the while in the publisher's counting-house, at length thought proper to interpose, parted the combatants, and sent the Doctor severely bruised home in a coach.

The subject of this dispute was long discussed in the public papers, which discanted on the impropriety of attacking a man in his own house; and an action was threatened for the assault; which was at length compromised, after our bard had published in the Daily Advertiser of March 31, 1773, the following address:

TO THE PUBLIC.

LEST it should be supposed that I have been willing to correct in others an abuse of which I have been guilty myself, I beg leave to declare, that in all my life I never wrote, or dictated, a single paragraph, letter, or essay, in a newspaper, except a few moral essays, under the character of a Chinese, about ten years ago, in the Ledger; and a letter, to which I signed my name, in the St. James's Chronicle. If the liberty of the press, therefore, has been abused, I have had no hand in it.

I have always considered the press as the protector of our freedom, as a watchful guardian, capable of uniting the weak against the encroachments of power.

What concerns the public most properly admits of a public discussion. But of late the press has turned from defending public interest, to making inroads upon private life; from combating the strong, to overwhelming the feeble. No condition is now too obscure for its abuse, and the protector is become the tyrant of the people. In this manner the freedom of the press is beginning to sow the seeds of its own dissolution; the great must oppose it from principle, and the weak from fear; till at last every rank of mankind shall be found to give up its benefits, content with security from its insults.

How to put a stop to this licentiousness, by which all are indiscriminately abused, and by which vice consequently escapes in the general censure, I am unabl to tell; all I could wish is, that as the law gives us no protection against the injury, so it should give calumniators no shelter after having provoked correction. The insults, which we receive before the public, by being more open, are the more distressing; by treating them with silent contempt, we do not pay a sufficient deference to the opinion of the world. By recurring to legal redress, we too often expose the weakness of the law, which only serves to increase our mortification by failing to relieve us. In short, every man should singly consider himself as a guardian of the liberty of the press, and, as far as his influence can extend, should endeavour to prevent its licentiousness becoming at last the grave of its freedom.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

On the subject of this adventure, we find the following curious and amusing conversation in Boswell.

'On Saturday, April 3,' says the biographer, 'the day after my arrival in London this year, I went to his (Dr. Johnson's) house late in the evening, and sat with

Mrs. Williams till he came home. I found in the London Chronicle Dr. Goldsmith's apology to the public for beating Evans, a bookseller, on account of a paragraph in a newspaper published by him, which Goldsmith thought impertinent to him and to a lady of his acquaintance. The apology was written so much in Dr. Johnson's manner, that both Mrs. Williams and I supposed it to be his; but when he came home he soon undeceived us. When he said to Mrs. Williams, "Well, Dr. Goldsmith's *manifesto* has got into your "paper;" I asked him if Dr. Goldsmith had written it, with an air that made him see I suspected it was his, though subscribed by Goldsmith.

JOHNSON. "Sir, Dr. Goldsmith would no more have asked me to have wrote such a thing as that for him, than he would have asked me to feed him with a spoon, or to do any thing else that denoted his imbecility. I as much believe that he wrote it, as if I had seen him do it. Sir, had he shown it to any one friend, he would not have been allowed to publish it. He has, indeed, done it very well, but it is a foolish thing well done. I suppose he has been so much elated with the success of his new comedy, that he has thought every thing that concerned him must be of importance to the public."

BOSWELL. "I fancy, Sir, this is the first time that he has been engaged in such an adventure.

JOHNSON. "Why, Sir, I believe it is the first time he has *beat;* he may have been *beaten* before. This, Sir, is a new pleasure to him."

Dr. Johnson took every opportunity that presented itself of praising the talents and genius of our author. Goldsmith's medical friend, by whose valuable and interesting communications we have been much obliged, has furnished us with the following anecdote:

"I was dining at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, August 7,

1773, where, amongst other company, were the Archbishop of Tuam and Mr. (now Lord) Elliot, when the latter making use of some sarcastical reflections on Goldsmith, Johnson broke out warmly in his defence, and, in the course of a spirited eulogium, said, 'Is there a man, Sir, now who can pen an essay with such ease and elegance as Goldsmith?'

On another occasion this great critic observed, 'Dr. Goldsmith is one of the first men we now have as an author, and he is a very worthy man too. He has been loose in his principles, but he is coming right*.'

One of his last publications was, "An History of the Earth and animated Nature," in 8 vols. 8vo. which was published in 1774, and which for two or three years before he had been preparing. The elegance and purity of the style, the interesting and striking reflections with which it abounds, and the powers of description which so frequently appear, must atone for the want of original information on the subjects introduced, and for the occasional mistakes, which were impossible to be avoided by a writer who took all his materials on trust; and, as far as they could be supplied, chiefly from Buffon. For this work he is said to have been paid by the bookseller, 850l. and during the time he was engaged in this undertaking he had received the copy money for his comedy, and the profits of his third nights: so that his receipts amounted at this time to a considerable sum. He was, however, so liberal in his donations, and profuse in his disbursements; he was unfortunately so attached to the pernicious practice of gaming; and from his unsettled habits of life, his supplies being precarious and uncertain, he had been so little accustomed to regulate his expenses by any system of economy, that his debts far

* Boswell's Life. Vol. i. p. 367.

exceeded his resources; and he was obliged to take up money in advance from the managers of the two theatres, for comedies, which he engaged to furnish to each; and from the booksellers, for publications which he was to finish for the press. All these engagements he fully intended, and doubtless would have been able to fulfil with the strictest honour, as he had done on former occasions in similar exigencies; but his premature death unhappily prevented the execution of his plans, and gave occasion to malignity to impute those failures to deliberate intention, which were merely the result of inevitable mortality.

Dr. Goldsmith, however, wrote by intervals about this time, his poems entitled, "The Haunch of Venison," "Retaliation," and some other little sportive sallies, which were not printed till after his death. He altered about this period the Grumbler from Sedley, which was acted at Covent Garden in the year 1772. This alteration was made to serve Mr. Quick at his benefit, and acted only on that night; it was never printed. But the chief publication which he was then projecting, was, "An Universal Dictionary of Arts and Sciences." This he intended should be a work of general entertainment, as well as instruction; in which, by the graces of his style, and his powers of writing, he hoped to render his account of the other sciences as interesting and amusing as he had made natural history in his book of "Animated Nature." He had engaged all his literary friends, and the members of the club, to contribute articles, each on the subject in which he excelled; so that it could not but have contained a great assemblage of excellent disquisitions. He accordingly had prepared a *Prospectus* *, in which, as usual, he gave a luminous view of

* This, with other papers and fugitive pieces, fell into the hands of Mr. Bott, a gentleman in the Temple, and au-

his design; but his death unfortunately prevented the execution of the work.

He was subject to severe fits of the stranguary, owing probably to the intemperate manner in which he confined himself to the desk, when he was employed in his compilations, often indeed for several weeks successively without taking exercise. On such occasions he usually hired lodgings in some farm house a few miles from London, and wrote without cessation till he had finished his task. He then carried his copy to the bookseller, received his compensation, and gave himself up perhaps for months without interruption, to the gayeties, amusements, and societies of London.

And here it may be observed, once for all, that his elegant and enchanting style in prose flowed from him with such facility, that in whole quires of his histories, Animated Nature, &c. he had seldom occasion to correct or alter a single word; but in his verses, especially his two great ethic poems, nothing could exceed the patient and incessant revisal which he bestowed upon them. To save himself the trouble of transcription, he wrote the lines in his first copy very wide, and would so fill up the intermediate space with reiterated corrections, that scarcely a word of his first effusions was left unaltered.

In the Spring of 1774, being embarrassed in his circumstances, and attacked with his usual malady, his indisposition, aggravated too by mental distress, terminated in a fever; which, on 25th March, had become exceedingly violent, when he called in medical assistance. Although he had then taken ipecacuanha

thor of a valuable work on the Poor Laws, (since dead) who had lent Dr. Goldsmith large sums of money, and being his principal creditor, took possession of his effects, &c.

to promote a vomit, he would proceed to the use of James's Fever Powder, contrary to the advice of the medical gentlemen who attended him. From the application of these powders he had received the greatest benefit in a similar attack nearly two years before, but then they had been administered by Dr. James himself in person. This happened in September, 1772. But now the progress of the disease was as unfavourable as possible; for from the time abovementioned every symptom became more and more alarming till Monday, April 4th, when he died, aged 45.

Mr. Hawes, his apothecary, who had discouraged the use of these powders, in the manner Dr. Goldsmith chose to apply them, published, in vindication of himself, and of two eminent physicians, who had concurred with him in opposing their patient's use of them, "An account of the late Dr. Goldsmith's ill-"ness, so far as relates to the exhibition of Dr. "James's Powders, &c. London, printed for W. "Brown, &c. 1774, 4to." In reply to some positions in this pamphlet, an advertisement was printed in the papers, containing the depositions of the servants who had attended their master in his illness, in which it appeared that Goldsmith had strongly intimated his opinion that he had not received the genuine powders, from the effects being so different from what he had ever experienced of this his favourite medicine.

It was deliberated by Sir Joshua Reynolds and other friends of the poor departed bard, whether it was more expedient to give him an expensive public funeral, or to inter him privately, and reserve the expenditure for a more lasting monument in the Poet's Corner, in Westminster Abbey. The latter opinion prevailed, and his remains were privately interred in

the Temple burial-ground, at five o'clock on Saturday evening, April 9, attended by the Rev. Joseph Palmer, (nephew of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and now Dean of Cashel, in Ireland,) Mr. Hugh Kelly, the dramatic poet, Messrs. John and Robert Day, Mr. Etherington, and Mr. (now Dr.) Hawes, his apothecary.

By a subscription raised among our poet's friends, and chiefly by his brethren of the club, a marble monument was executed by Nollikins, and placed in Westminster Abbey, between that of Gay and the Duke of Argyle, in the Poet's Corner; consisting of a large medallion, with a good resemblance of the Doctor in profile, embellished with appropriate ornaments; and underneath, on a tablet of white marble, the following inscription, written by Dr. Johnson*.

OLIVARI GOLDSMITH,
Poetæ, Physici, Historici,
Qui nullum ferè scribendi genus non tetigit,
Nullum, quod tetigit, non ornavit;
Sive Risus essent movendi,
Sive Lacrymæ,
Affectuum potens, at lenis Dominator:
Ingenio sublimis, vividus, versatilis,
Oratione grandis, nitidus, venustus;
Hoc Monumento Memoriam coluit
Sodalium Amor,
Amicorum Fides,
Lectorum Veneratio.
Natus in Hibernià Forniæ Longfordiensis
In loco cui nomen Pallas,
Nov. xxix. MDCCXXXI †.

* See a humorous account of an Address to Dr. Johnson, in the form of a round robin, concerning this epitaph, in Boswell's Life of Johnson. Vol. III. p. 84.

† The year of Dr. Goldsmith's birth had been universally

Eblanæ Literis institutus,
Obiit Londini,
April iv. MDCCLXXIV.

In addition to this Latin epitaph, Dr. Johnson honoured the memory of his friend with the following Greek tetrastic:

Τὸν ταφον εἰσοράας του Ολιβαρίοιο, κονιην
Α"φροσι μη᾽ σεμνην, Ξεινε, πόδεσσι πάτει·
Οἷσι μέμηλε φύσις, μείρων χάρις, ἔργα παλαιῶν
Κλαιέτε ποιητην, ἱστόρικον, φύσικον.

The general traits of Dr. Goldsmith's character have been in a great measure delineated in the preceding pages. He was generous in the extreme, and so strongly affected by compassion, that he has been known at midnight to abandon his rest, in order to procure relief and an asylum for a poor dying object who was left destitute in the streets. Nor was there ever a mind whose general feelings were more benevolent and friendly. He is, however, supposed to have been often soured by jealousy or envy; and many little instances are mentioned of this tendency in his character: but whatever appeared of this kind was a mere momentary sensation, which he knew not how like other men to conceal. It was never the result of principle, or the suggestion of reflection; it never embittered his heart, nor influenced his conduct. Nothing could be more amiable than the gene-

mistaken, till his family some time after his death furnished correct information of the circumstance, which they state to have happened in the year 1728. That he was born in that year, is confirmed by his letter to his brother Henry, written in 1759, when he says his age was 31.

ral features of his mind: those of his person were not perhaps so engaging.

His stature was under the middle size, his body strongly built, and his limbs more sturdy than elegant: his complexion was pale, his forehead low, his face almost round, and pitted with the small-pox; but marked with strong lines of thinking. His first appearance was not captivating; but when he grew easy and cheerful in company, he relaxed into such a display of good humour, as soon removed every unfavourable impression.

Yet it must be acknowledged, that in company he did not appear to so much advantage, as might have been expected from his genius and talents. He was too apt to speak without reflection, and without a sufficient knowledge of the subject; which made Johnson observe of him, "No man was more foolish when he "had not a pen in his hand, or more wise when he "had*." Indeed, with all his defects, (to conclude nearly in the words of that great critic†,) "As a wri-"ter, he was of the most distinguished abilities. "Whatever he composed, he did it better than any "other man could. And whether we consider him "as a Poet, as a Comic Writer, or as an Historian, "(so far as regards his powers of composition,) he "was one of the first writers of his time, and will "ever stand in the foremost class."

* Boswell's Life, Vol. IV. p. 29.
† Ibid. Vol. III. p. 273.

AN

INQUIRY

INTO THE PRESENT STATE OF

POLITE LEARNING.

CHAP. I.

INTRODUCTION.

IT has been so long the practice to represent literature as declining, that every renewal of this complaint now comes with diminished influence. The public has been so often excited by a false alarm, that at present, the nearer we approach the threatened period of decay, the more our security increases.

It will now probably be said, that taking the decay of genius for granted, as I do, argues either resentment or partiality. The writer, possessed of fame, it may be asserted, is willing to enjoy it without a rival, by lessening every competitor; or, if unsuccessful, he is desirous to turn upon others the contempt which is levelled at himself, and being convicted at the bar of literary justice, hopes for pardon by accusing every brother of the same profession.

Sensible of this, I am at a loss where to find an apology for persisting to arraign the merit of the age; for joining in a cry which the judicious have long since left to be kept up by the vulgar, and for adopting the sentiments of the multitude in a performance that at best can please only a few.

Complaints of our degeneracy in literature as well as in morals, I own, have been frequently exhibited of late; but seem to be enforced more with the ardour of devious declamation, than the calmness of deliberate inquiry. The dullest critic, who strives at a reputation for delicacy, by showing he cannot be pleased, may pathetically assure us that our taste is upon the decline, may consign every modern performance to oblivion, and bequeath nothing to posterity except the labours of our ancestors or his own. Such general invective, however, conveys no instruction; all it teaches is, that the writer dislikes an age by which he is probably disregarded. The manner of being useful on the subject, would be to point out the symptoms, to investigate the causes, and direct to the remedies of the approaching decay. This is a subject hitherto unattempted in criticism; perhaps it is the only subject in which criticism can be useful.

How far the writer is equal to such an undertaking, the reader must determine; yet, perhaps, his observations may be just, though his manner of expressing them should only serve as an example of the errors he undertakes to reprove.

Novelty, however, is not permitted to usurp the place of reason; it may attend, but shall not conduct the inquiry. But it should be observed, that the more original any performance is, the more it is liable to deviate; for cautious stupidity is always in the right.

CHAP. II.

The causes which contribute to the decline of Learning.

IF we consider the revolutions which have happened in the commonwealth of letters, survey the rapid

progress of learning in one period of antiquity, or its amazing decline in another, we shall be almost induced to accuse nature of partiality, as if she had exhausted all her efforts in adorning one age, while she left the succeeding entirely neglected. It is not to nature, however, but to ourselves alone, that this partiality must be ascribed; the seeds of excellence are sown in every age, and it is wholly owing to a wrong direction in the passions or pursuits of mankind, that they have not received the proper cultivation.

As in the best regulated societies, the very laws which at first give the government solidity, may in the end contribute to its dissolution, so the efforts which might have promoted learning in its feeble commencement, may, if continued, retard its progress. The paths of science, which were at first intricate because untrodden, may at last grow toilsome, because too much frequented. As learning advances, the candidates for its honours become more numerous, and the acquisition of fame more uncertain; the modest may despair of attaining it, and the opulent think it too precarious to pursue; thus the task of supporting the honour of the times may at last devolve on indigence and effrontery, while learning must partake of the contempt of its professors.

To illustrate these assertions, it may be proper to take a slight review of the decline of ancient learning; to consider how far its depravation was owing to the impossibility of supporting continued perfection; in what respects it proceeded from voluntary corruption; and how far it was hastened on by accident. If Modern learning be compared with Ancient in these different lights, a parallel between both, which has hitherto produced only vain dispute, may contribute to amusement, perhaps to instruction. We shall thus be enabled to perceive what period of anti-

quity the present age most resembles, whether we are making advances towards excellence, or retiring again to primeval obscurity; we shall thus be taught to acquiesce in those defects which it is impossible to prevent; and reject all faulty innovations, though offered under the specious titles of improvement.

Learning, when planted in any country, is transient and fading, nor does it flourish till slow gradations of improvement have naturalized it to the soil. It makes feeble advances, begins among the vulgar, and rises into reputation among the great. It cannot be established in a state at once, by introducing the learned of other countries; these may grace a court, but seldom enlighten a kingdom. Ptolemy, Philadelphus, Constantine Porphyrogeneta, Alfred, or Charlemagne, might have invited learned foreigners into their dominions, but could not establish learning. While in the radiance of royal favour, every art and science seemed to flourish; but when that was withdrawn, they quickly felt the rigours of a strange climate, and with exotic constitutions perished by neglect.

As the arts and sciences are slow in coming to maturity, it is requisite, in order to their perfection, that the state should be permanent which gives them reception. There are numberless attempts without success, and experiments without conclusion, between the first rudiments of an art, and its utmost perfection: between the outlines of a shadow and the picture of an Apelles. Leisure is required to go through the tedious interval, to join the experience of predecessors to our own, or enlarge our views by building on the ruined attempts of former adventurers. All this may be performed in a society of long continuance; but if the kingdom be but of short duration, as was the case of

Arabia, learning seems coeval, sympathizes with its political struggles, and is annihilated in its dissolution.

But permanence in a state is not alone sufficient; it is requisite also for this end that it should be free. Naturalists assure us, that all animals are sagacious in proportion as they are removed from the tyranny of others; in native liberty, the elephant is a citizen, and the beaver an architect; but whenever the tyrant man intrudes upon their community, their spirit is broken, they seem anxious only for safety, and their intellects suffer an equal diminution with their prosperity. The parallel will hold with regard to mankind; fear naturally depresses invention; benevolence, ambition; for in a nation of slaves, as in the despotic governments of the east, to labour after fame is to be a candidate for danger.

To attain literary excellence also, it is requisite that the soil and climate should, as much as possible, conduce to happiness. The earth must supply man with the necessaries of life, before he has leisure or inclination to pursue more refined enjoyments. The climate also must be equally indulgent, for in too warm a region, the mind is relaxed into languor, and by the opposite excess, is chilled into torpid inactivity.

These are the principal advantages which tend to the improvement of learning, and all these were united in the states of Greece and Rome.

We must now examine what hastens, or prevents its decline.

Those who behold the phænomena of nature, and content themselves with the view without inquiring into their causes, are perhaps wiser than is generally imagined. In this manner our rude ancestors were acquainted with facts; and Poetry, which helped the imagination and the memory, was thought the most proper vehicle for conveying their knowledge to pos-

terity. It was the poet who harmonized the ungrateful accents of his native dialect, who lifted it above common conversation, and shaped its rude combinations into order. From him the orator formed a style, and though poetry first rose out of prose, in turn it gave birth to every prosaic excellence. Musical period, concise expression, and delicacy of sentiment, were all excellencies derived from the poet; in short, he not only preceded, but formed the orator, philosopher, and historian.

When the observations of past ages were collected, philosophy next began to examine their causes. She had numberless facts from which to draw proper inferences, and poetry had taught her the strongest expression to enforce them. Thus the Greek philosophers, for instance, exerted all their happy talents in the investigation of truth, and the production of beauty. They saw, that there was more excellence in captivating the judgment, than in raising a momentary astonishment: in their arts they imitated only such parts of nature as might please in the representation; in the sciences, they cultivated such parts of knowledge, as it was every man's duty to know. Thus learning was encouraged, protected, honoured, and in its turn it adorned, strengthened, and harmonized the community.

But as the mind is vigorous and active, and experiment is dilatory and painful, the spirit of philosophy being excited, the reasoner, when destitute of experiment, had recourse to theory, and gave up what was useful for refinement.

Critics, sophists, grammarians, rhetoricians, and commentators, now began to figure in the literary commonwealth. In the dawn of science, such are generally modest, and not entirely useless; their performances serve to mark the progress of learning,

though they seldom contribute to its improvement. But as nothing but speculation was required in making proficients in their respective departments, so neither the satire nor the contempt of the wise, though Socrates was of the number, nor the laws levelled at them by the state, though Cato was in the legislature, could prevent their approaches*. Possessed of all the advantages of unfeeling dulness, laborious, insensible, and persevering, they still proceeded mending and mending every work of genius, or, to speak without irony, undermining all that was polite and useful. Libraries were loaded, but not enriched, with their labours; while the fatigues of reading their explanatory comments was tenfold that which might suffice for understanding the original, and their works effectually increased our application, by professing to remove it.

Against so obstinate and irrrefragable an enemy, what could avail the unsupported sallies of genius, or the opposition of transitory resentment? In short, they conquered by persevering, claimed the right of dictating upon every work of taste, sentiment, or genius, and at last, when destitute of other employment, like the supernumerary domestics of the great, made work for each other.

They now took upon them to teach poetry to those who wanted genius; and the power of disputing, to those who knew nothing of the subject in debate. It was observed, how some of the most admired poets had copied nature. From these they collected dry rules, dignified with long names, and such were obtruded upon the public for their improvement. Common sense would be apt to suggest, that the art might be studied to more advantage, rather by imitation than precept. It might suggest that those rules were col-

* Vide Sueton. Hist. Gram.

lected, not from nature, but a copy of nature, and would consequently give us still fainter resemblances of original beauty. It might still suggest, that explained wit makes but a feeble impression, that the observations of others are soon forgotten, those made by ourselves are permanent and useful. But, it seems, understandings of every size were to be mechanically instructed in poetry. If the reader was too dull to relish the beauties of Virgil, the comment of Servius was ready to brighten his imagination; if Terence could not raise him to a smile, Evantius was at hand, with a long-winded scholium, to increase his titillation. Such rules are calculated to make blockheads talk, but all the lemmata of the Lyceum are unable to give him feeling.

But it would be endless to recount all the absurdities which were hatched in the schools of those specious idlers; be it sufficient to say, that they increased as learning improved, but swarmed on its decline. It was then that every work of taste was buried in long comments, every useful subject in morals was distinguished away into casuistry, and doubt and subtilty characterised the learning of the age. Metrodorus, Valerius Probus, Aulus Gellius, Pedianus, Boethius, and an hundred others, to be acquainted with whom might show much reading, and but little judgment; these, I say, made choice each of an author, and delivered all their load of learning on his back; shame to our ancestors! many of their works have reached our times entire, while Tacitus himself has suffered mutilation.

In a word, the commonwealth of literature was at last wholly overrun by these studious triflers. Men of real genius were lost in the multitude, or, as in a world of fools it were folly to aim at being an only exception, obliged to conform to every prevailing absur-

dity of the times. Original productions seldom appeared, and learning, as if grown superannuated, bestowed all its panegyric upon the vigour of its youth, and turned encomiast upon its former achievements.

It is to these, then, that the depravation of ancient polite learning is principally to be ascribed. By them it was separated from common sense, and made the proper employment of speculative idlers. Men bred up among books, and seeing nature only by reflection, could do little, except hunt after perplexity and confusion. The public, therefore, with reason, rejected learning, when thus rendered barren, though voluminous; for we may be assured, that the generality of mankind never lose a passion for letters, while they continue to be either amusing or useful.

It was such writers as these that rendered learning unfit for uniting and strengthening civil society, or for promoting the views of ambition. True philosophy had kept the Grecian states cemented into one effective body, more than any law for that purpose; and the Etrurian philosophy, which prevailed in the first ages of Rome, inspired those patriot virtues which paved the way to universal empire. But by the labours of commentators, when philosophy became abstruse, or triflingly minute, when doubt was presented instead of knowledge, when the orator was taught to charm the multitude with the music of his periods, and pronounced a declamation that might be sung as well as spoken, and often upon subjects wholly fictitious; in such circumstances, learning was entirely unsuited to all the purposes of government, or the designs of the ambitious. As long as the sciences could influence the state, and its politics were strengthened by them, so long did the community give them countenance and protection But the wiser part of mankind would not be imposed upon by unintelligible jar-

gon, nor, like the knight in Pantagruel, swallow a chimera for a breakfast, though even cooked by Aristotle. As the philosopher grew useless in the state, he also became contemptible. In the times of Lucian he was chiefly remarkable for his avarice, his impudence, and his beard.

Under the auspicious influence of genius, arts and sciences grew up together, and mutually illustrated each other. But when once pedants became lawgivers, the sciences began to want grace, and the polite arts solidity; these grew crabbed and sour, those meretricious and gaudy; the philosopher became disgustingly precise, and the poet, ever straining after grace, caught only finery.

These men also contributed to obstruct the progress of wisdom, by addicting their readers to one particular sect, or some favourite science. They generally carried on a petty traffic in some little creek; within that they busily plied about, and drove an insignificant trade; but never ventured out into the great ocean of knowledge, nor went beyond the bounds that chance, conceit, or laziness, had first prescribed their inquiries. Their disciples, instead of aiming at being originals themselves, became imitators of that merit alone which was constantly proposed for their admiration. In exercises of this kind, the most stupid are generally most successful; for there is not in nature a more imitative animal than a dunce.

Hence ancient learning may be distinguished into three periods. Its commencement, or the age of poets; its maturity, or the age of philosophers; and its decline, or the age of critics. In the poetical age, commentators were very few, but might have in some respects been useful. In its philosophical, their assistance must necessarily become obnoxious; yet, as if the nearer we approached perfection, the more we

stood in need of their directions, in this period they began to grow numerous. But when polite learning was no more, then it was those literary lawgivers made the most formidable appearance.

Corruptissima republica, plurimæ leges. TACIT.

But let us take a more distinct view of those ages of ignorance, in which false refinement had involved mankind, and see how far they resemble our own.

CHAP. III.

A View of the Obscure Ages.

WHATEVER the skill of any country may be in the sciences, it is from its excellence in polite learning alone, that it must expect a character from posterity. The poet and the historian are they who diffuse a lustre upon the age, and the philosopher scarcely acquires any applause, unless his character be introduced to the vulgar by their mediation.

The obscure ages, which succeeded the decline of the Roman empire, are a striking instance of the truth of this assertion. Whatever period of those ill-fated times we happen to turn to, we shall perceive more skill in the sciences among the professors of them, more abstruse and deeper inquiry into every philosophical subject, and a greater show of subtilty and close reasoning, than in the most enlightened ages of all antiquity. But their writings were mere speculative amusements, and all their researches ex

hausted upon trifles. Unskilled in the arts of adorning their knowledge, or adapting it to common sense, their voluminous productions rest peacefully in our libraries, or at best are inquired after from motives of curiosity, not by the scholar, but the virtuoso.

I am not insensible that several late French historians have exhibited the obscure ages in a very different light; they have represented them as utterly ignorant both of arts and sciences, buried in the profoundest darkness, or only illuminated with a feeble gleam, which, like an expiring taper, rose and sunk by intervals. Such assertions, however, though they serve to help out the declaimer, should be cautiously admitted by the historian For instance, the tenth century is particularly distinguished by posterity with the appellation of obscure. Yet even in this the reader's memory may possibly suggest the names of some, whose works, still preserved, discover a most extensive erudition, though rendered almost useless by affectation and obscurity. A few of their names and writings may be mentioned, which will serve at once to confirm what I assert, and give the reader an idea of what kind of learning an age declining into obscurity chiefly chooses to cultivate.

About the tenth century flourished Leo the philosopher. We have seven volumes folio of his collection of laws, published at Paris, 1647. He wrote upon the art military, and understood also astronomy and judicial astrology. He was seven times more voluminous than Plato.

Solomon the German wrote a most elegant dictionary of the Latin tongue, still preserved in the university of Louvain; Pantaleon, in the lives of his illustrious countrymen, speaks of it in the warmest strains of rapture. Dictionary writing was at that time much in fashion.

Constantine Porphyrogeneta was a man universally skilled in the sciences. His tracts on the administration of an empire, on tactics, and on laws, were published some years since at Leyden. His court, for he was emperor of the East, was resorted to by the learned from all parts of the world.

Luitprandus was a most voluminous historian, and particularly famous for the history of his own times. The compliments paid him as a writer, are said to exceed even his own voluminous productions. I cannot pass over one of a latter date made him by a German divine: *Luitprandus nunquam Luitprando dissimilis.*

Alfric composed several grammars and dictionaries still preserved among the curious.

Pope Sylvester the second, wrote a treatise on the sphere, on arithmetic, and geometry, published some years since at Paris.

Michael Psellus lived in this age, whose books in the sciences, I will not scruple to assert, contain more learning than those of any one of the earlier ages; his erudition was indeed amazing, and he was as voluminous as he was learned. The character given him by Allatius, has, perhaps, more truth in it than will be granted by those who have seen none of his productions. There was, says he, no science with which he was unacquainted, none which he did not write something upon, and none which he did not leave better than he found it. To mention his works would be endless. His commentaries on Aristotle alone amount to three folios.

Bertholdus Teutonicus, a very voluminous historian, was a politician, and wrote against the government under which he lived: but most of his writings, though not all, are lost.

Constantius Afer was a philosopher and physician. We have remaining but two volumes folio of

his philological performances. However, the historian who prefixes the life of the author to his works, says, that he wrote many more, as he kept on writing, during the course of a long life.

Lambertus published an universal history about this time, which has been printed at Frankfort in folio. An universal history in one folio! If he had consulted with his bookseller, he would have spun it out to ten at least; but Lambertus might have had too much modesty.

By this time the reader perceives the spirit of learning, which at that time prevailed. The ignorance of the age, was not owing to a dislike of knowledge, but a false standard of taste was erected, and a wrong direction given to philosophical inquiry. It was the fashion of the day to write dictionaries, commentaries, and compilations, and to evaporate in a folio the spirit that could scarcely have sufficed for an epigram. The most barbarous times had men of learning, if commentators, compilers, polemic divines, and intricate metaphysicians, deserved the title.

I have mentioned but a very inconsiderable number of the writers in this age of obscurity. The multiplicity of their publications will at least equal those of any similar period of the most polite antiquity. As, therefore, the writers of those times are almost entirely forgotten, we may infer, that the number of publications alone will never secure any age whatsoever from oblivion. Nor can printing, contrary to what Mr. Baumelle has remarked, prevent literary decline for the future, since it only increases the number of books, without advancing their intrinsic merit.

CHAP. IV.

Of the present state of Polite Learning in Italy.

FROM ancient we are now come to modern times, and in running over Europe, we shall find that, wherever learning has been cultivated, it has flourished by the same advantages as in Greece and Rome; and that, wherever it has declined, it sinks by the same causes of decay.

Dante, the poet of Italy, who wrote in the thirteenth century, was the first who attempted to bring learning from the cloister into the community, and paint human nature in a language adapted to modern manners. He addressed a barbarous people in a method suited to their apprehensions; united purgatory and the river Styx, St. Peter and Virgil, heaven and hell, together, and shows a strange mixture of good sense and absurdity. The truth is, he owes most of his reputation to the obscurity of the times in which he lived. As in the land of Benin a man may pass for a prodigy of parts who can read, so in an age of barbarity a small degree of excellence ensures success. But it was great merit in him to have lifted up the standard of nature, in spite of all the opposition and the persecution he received from contemporary criticism. To this standard every succeeding genius resorted; the germ of every art and science began to unfold, and to imitate nature was found to be the surest way of imitating antiquity. In a century or two after, modern Italy might justly boast of rivalling ancient Rome; equal in some branches of polite learning, and not far surpassed in others.

They soon, however, fell from emulating the wonders of antiquity, into simple admiration. As if the word had been given when Vida and Tasso wrote on the arts of poetry, the whole swarm of critics was up; the Speroni's of the age attempted to be awkwardly merry; and the virtuosi and the Nascotti sat upon the merits of every contemporary performance. After the age of Clement VII. the Italians seemed to think that there was more merit in praising or censuring well, than in writing well; almost every subsequent performance since that time being designed rather to show the excellence of the critic's taste than his genius; one or two poets indeed seem at present born to redeem the honour of their country. Metastasio has restored nature in all her simplicity. And Maffei is the first that has introduced a tragedy among his countrymen without a love-plot. Perhaps the Samson of Milton, and the Athalia of Racine, might have been his guides in such an attempt. But two poets in an age are not sufficient to revive the splendour of decaying genius; nor should we consider them as the standard by which to characterise a nation. Our measures of literary reputation must be taken rather from that numerous class of men who, placed above the vulgar, are yet beneath the great, and who confer fame on others without receiving any portion of it themselves.

In Italy, then, we shall no where find a stronger passion for the arts of taste, yet no country making more feeble efforts to promote either. The Virtuosi and Filosofi seem to have divided the Encyclopedia between each other. Both inviolably attached to their respective pursuits, and from an opposition of character, each holding the other in the most sovereign contempt. The Virtuosi, professed critics of beauty in the works of art, judge of medals by the

smell, and pictures by feeling. In statuary, hang over a fragment with the most ardent gaze of admiration; though wanting the head and the other extremities, if dug from a ruin, the *Torse* becomes inestimable. An unintelligible monument of Etruscan barbarity cannot be sufficiently prized; and any thing from Herculaneum excites rapture. When the intellectual taste is thus decayed, its relish becomes false, and, like that of sense, nothing will satisfy but what is best suited to feed the disease.

Poetry is no longer among them an imitation of what we see, but of what a visionary might wish. The zephyr breathes the most exquisite perfume, the trees wear eternal verdure; fauns, and dryads, and hamadryads, stand ready to fan the sultry shepherdess, who has forgot indeed the prettiness with which Guarini's shepherdesses have been reproached, but is so simple and innocent as often to have no meaning. Happy country, where the pastoral age begins to revive! Where the wits even of Rome are united into a rural groupe of nymphs and swains under the appellation of modern Arcadians. Where, in the midst of porticos, processions, and cavalcades, abbés turned shepherds, and shepherdesses without sheep indulge their innocent *divertimenti*.

The Filosofi are entirely different from the former. As those pretend to have got their knowledge from conversing with the living and polite, so these boast of having theirs from books and study. Bred up all their lives in colleges, they have there learned to think in track, servilely to follow the leader of their sect, and only to adopt such opinions as their universities, or the inquisition, are pleased to allow.

By these means they are behind the rest of Europe in several modern improvements—afraid to think for themselves; and their universities seldom admit

opinions as true, till universally received among the rest of mankind. In short, were I to personize my ideas of learning in this country, I would represent it in the tawdry habits of the stage, or else in the more homely guise of bearded school-philosophy.

CHAP. V.

Of polite learning in Germany.

IF we examine the state of learning in Germany, we shall find that the Germans early discovered a passion for polite literature; but unhappily, like conquerors, who, invading the dominions of others, leave their own to desolation, instead of studying the German tongue they continue to write in Latin; thus, while they cultivated an obsolete language, and vainly laboured to apply it to modern manners, they neglected their own.

At the same time also they began at the wrong end, I mean by being commentators, and though they have given many instances of their industry, they have scarcely afforded any of genius. If criticism could have improved the taste of a people, the Germans would have been the most polite nation alive. We shall no where behold the learned wear a more important appearance than here; no where more dignified with professorships, or dressed out in the fopperies of scholastic finery. However, they seem to earn all the honours of this kind which they enjoy. Their assiduity is unparalleled; and did they employ half those hours on study which they bestow on reading, we might be induced to pity as well as praise

their painful pre-eminence. But guilty of a fault too common to great readers, they write through volumes, while they do not think through a page. Never fatigued themselves, they think the reader can never be weary; so they drone on, saying all that can be said on the subject, not selecting what may be advanced to the purpose. Were angels to write books they never would write folios.

But let the Germans have their due; if they are dull, no nation alive assumes a more laudable solemnity, or better understands all the decorums of stupidity. Let the discourse of a professor run on never so heavily, it cannot be irksome to his dosing pupils, who frequently lend him sympathetic nods of approbation. I have sometimes attended their disputes at gradation. On this occasion they often dispense with their gravity, and seem really all alive. The disputes are managed between the followers of Cartesius, whose exploded system, they continue to call the new philosophy, and those of Aristotle. Though both parties are in the wrong, they argue with an obstinacy worthy the cause of truth; Nego, Probo, and Distinguo, grow loud; the disputants become warm, the moderator cannot be heard, the audience take part in the debate, till at last the whole hall buzzes with sophistry and error.

There are, it is true, several societies in this country, which are chiefly calculated to promote knowledge. His late majesty, as elector of Hanover, has established one at Gottingen, at an expense of not less than a hundred thousand pounds. This university has already pickled monsters, and dissected live puppies, without number. Their transactions have been published in the learned world, at proper intervals, since their institution; and will, it is hoped, one day give them just reputation. But had the fourth part of

the immense sum above mentioned been given in proper rewards to genius, in some neighbouring countries, it would have rendered the name of the donor immortal, and added to the real interests of society.

Yet it ought to be observed, that of late learning has been patronized here by a prince, who, in the humblest station, would have been the first of mankind. The society established by the king of Prussia, at Berlin, is one of the finest literary institutions, that any age or nation has produced. This academy, comprehends all the sciences, under four different classes; and although the object of each is different, and admits of being separately treated, yet these classes mutually influence the progress of each other, and concur in the same general design. Experimental philosophy, mathematics, metaphysics, and polite literature, are here carried on together. The members are not collected from among the students of some obscure seminary, or the wits of the metropolis, but chosen from all the literati of Europe, supported by the bounty, and ornamented by the productions of their royal founder. We can easily discern, how much such an institution excels any other now subsisting. One fundamental error among societies of this kind, is their addicting themselves to one branch of science, or some particular part of polite learning. Thus in Germany, there are no where so many establishments of this nature; but as they generally profess the promotion of natural or medical knowledge, he who reads their Acta, will only find an obscure farago of experiments, most frequently terminated by no resulting phænomena. To make experiments, is, I own, the only way to promote natural knowledge; but to treasure up every unsuccessful inquiry into nature, or to communicate every experiment without conclusion, is not to promote science, but oppress it.

Had the members of these societies enlarged their plans, and taken in art as well as science, one part of knowledge would have repressed any faulty luxuriance in the other, and all would have mutually assisted each other's promotion. Besides, the society which, with a contempt of all collateral assistance, admits of members skilled in one science only, whatever their diligence or labour may be, will lose much time in the discovery of such truths as are well known already to the learned, in a different line: consequently, their progress must be slow, in gaining a proper eminence from which to view their subject, and their strength will be exhausted, in attaining the station whence they should have set out. With regard to the Royal Society of London, the greatest, and perhaps the oldest institution of the kind, had it widened the basis of its institution, though they might not have propagated more discoveries, they would probably have delivered them in a more pleasing and compendious form. They would have been free from the contempt of the ill-natured, and the raillery of the wit, for which, even candour must allow, there is but too much foundation. But the Berlin academy, is subject to none of all these inconveniencies, but every one of its individuals, is in a capacity of deriving more from the common stock than he contributes to it, while each academician, serves as a check upon the rest of his fellows.

Yet, very probably, even this fine institution, will soon decay. As it rose, so it will decline, with its great encourager. The society, if I may so speak, is artificially supported; the introduction of foreigners of learning, was right; but in adopting a foreign language also, I mean the French, in which all the transactions are to be published, and questions debated: in this there was an error. As I have already hinted, the language of the natives of every country, should

be also the language of its polite learning. To figure in polite learning, every country should make their own language from their own manners; nor will they ever succeed by introducing that of another, which has been formed from manners, which are different. Besides, an academy composed of foreigners, must still be recruited from abroad, unless all the natives of the country to which it belongs, are in a capacity of becoming candidates for its honours or rewards. While France, therefore, continues to supply Berlin, polite learning will flourish; but when royal favour is withdrawn, learning will return to its natural country.

CHAP. VI.

Of polite learning in Holland, and some other countries of Europe.

HOLLAND, at first view, appears to have some pretensions to polite learning. It may be regarded as the great emporium, not less of literature, than of every other commodity. Here, though destitute of what may be properly called a language of their own, all the languages are understood, cultivated, and spoken. All useful inventions in arts, and new discoveries in science, are published here almost as soon as at the places which first produced them. Its individuals have the same faults, however, with the Germans, of making more use of their memory, than their judgment. The chief employment of their literati is to criticise, or answer the new performances which appear elsewhere.

A dearth of wit in France or England, naturally produces a scarcity in Holland. What Ovid says of Echo, may be applied here, *Nec loqui prius ipsa didicit nec reticere loquenti.* They wait till something new comes out from others; examine its merits and reject it, or make it reverberate through the rest of Europe.

After all, I know not whether they should be allowed any national character for polite learning. All their taste is derived to them from neighbouring nations, and that in a language not their own. They somewhat resemble their brokers, who trade for immense sums without having any capital.

The other countries of Europe may be considered as immersed in ignorance, or making but feeble efforts to rise. Spain has long fallen from amazing Europe with her wit, to amusing them with the greatness of her catholic credulity. Rome considers her as the most favourite of all her children, and school-divinity still reigns there in triumph. In spite of all attempts of the Marquis D'Ensanada, who saw with regret the barbarity of his countrymen, and bravely offered to oppose it, by introducing new systems of learning, and suppressing the seminaries of monastic ignorance, in spite of the ingenuity of Padré Feio, whose book of vulgar errors so finely exposes the monkish stupidity of the times, the religious have prevailed. Ensanada has been banished, and now lives in exile; Feio has incurred the hatred and contempt of every bigot whose errors he has attempted to oppose, and feels no doubt the unremitting displeasure of the priesthood. Persecution is a tribute the Great must ever pay for pre-eminence.

It is a little extraordinary, however, how Spain, whose genius is naturally fine, should be so much behind the rest of Europe in this particular; or why school-divinity should hold its ground there for nearly

six hundred years. The reason must be, that philosophical opinions, which are otherwise transient, acquire stability in proportion as they are connected with the laws of the country, and philosophy and law have been no where so closely united as here.

Sweden has of late made some attempts in polite learning in its own language. Count Tessin's instructions to the prince, his pupil, are no bad beginning. If the Muses can fix their residence so far northward, perhaps no country bids so fair for their reception. They have, I am told, a language rude, but energetic; if so, it will bear a polish: they have also a jealous sense of liberty, and that strength of thinking peculiar to northern climates, without its attendant ferocity. They will certainly in time produce somewhat great, if their intestine divisions do not unhappily prevent them.

The history of polite learning in Denmark may be comprised in the life of one single man; it rose and fell with the late famous Baron Holberg. This was, perhaps, one of the most extraordinary personages that has done honour to the present century. His being the son of a private sentinel did not abate the ardour of his ambition: for he learned to read, though without a master. Upon the death of his father, being left entirely destitute, he was involved in all that distress which is common among the poor, and of which the great have scarcely any idea. However, though only a boy of nine years old, he still persisted in pursuing his studies, travelled about from school to school, and begged his learning and his bread. When at the age of seventeen, instead of applying himself to any of the lower occupations, which seem best adapted to such circumstances, he was resolved to travel for improvement, from Norway, the place of his birth, to Copenhagen, the capital city of

Denmark. He lived there by teaching French, at the same time avoiding no opportunity of improvement that his scanty funds could permit. But his ambition was not to be restrained, or his thirst of knowledge satisfied, until he had seen the world. Without money, recommendations, or friends, he undertook to set out upon his travels, and make the tour of Europe on foot. A good voice, and a trifling skill in music, were the only finances he had to support an undertaking so extensive; so he travelled by day, and at night sung at the doors of peasants' houses to get himself a lodging. In this manner, while yet very young, Holberg passed through France, Germany, and Holland, and coming over to England, took up his residence for two years in the university of Oxford. Here he subsisted by teaching French and music, and wrote his Universal History, his earliest, but worst performance. Furnished with all the learning of Europe, he at last thought proper to return to Copenhagen, where his ingenious productions quickly gained him that favour he deserved. He composed not less than eighteen comedies; those in his own language are said to excel, and those which are translated into French have peculiar merit. He was honoured with nobility, and enriched by the bounty of the king; so that a life begun in contempt and penury, ended in opulence and esteem.

Thus we see in what a low state polite learning is in the countries I have mentioned, either past its prime or not yet arrived at maturity. And though the sketch I have drawn, be general, yet it was for the most part taken upon the spot. I am sensible, however, of the impropriety of national reflection; and did not truth bias me more than inclination in this particular, I should, instead of the account already given, have presented the reader with a pane-

gyric on many of the individuals of every country, whose merits deserve the warmest strains of praise. Apostol Zeno, Algarotti, Goldoni, Muratori, and Stay, in Italy; Haller, Klopstock, and Rabner, in Germany; Muschenbrook, and Gaubius, in Holland; all deserve the highest applause. Men like these, united by one bond, pursuing one design, spend their labour and their lives in making their fellow-creatures happy, and in repairing the breaches caused by ambition. In this light, the meanest philosopher, though all his possessions are his lamp or his cell, is more truly valuable, than he whose name echoes to the shout of the million, and who stands in all the glare of admiration. In this light, though poverty and contemptuous neglect, are all the wages of his good will from mankind, yet the rectitude of his intention, is an ample recompense; and self-applause for the present, and the alluring prospect of fame for futurity, reward his labours. The perspective of life brightens upon us, when terminated by an object so charming. Every intermediate image of want, banishment, or sorrow, receives a lustre from its distant influence. With this in view, the patriot, philosopher, and poet, have often looked with calmness on disgrace and famine, and rested on their straw, with cheerful serenity. Even the last terrors of departing nature abate of their severity, and look kindly on him, who considers his sufferings as a passport to immortality, and lays his sorrows on the bed of fame.

CHAP. VII.

Of Polite Learning in France.

WE have hitherto seen, that wherever the poet was permitted to begin by improving his native language, polite learning flourished; but where the critic undertook the same task, it has never risen to any degree of perfection. Let us now examine the merits of modern learning in France and England; where, though it may be on the decline, yet it is still capable of retrieving much of its former splendour. In other places, learning has not yet been planted, or has suffered a total decay. To attempt amendment there, would be only like the application of remedies to an insensible or a mortified part; but here there is still life, and there is hope. And indeed, the French themselves are so far from giving into any despondence of this kind, that on the contrary, they admire the progress they are daily making in every science; that levity, for which we are apt to despise this nation, is probably the principal source of their happiness. An agreeable oblivion of past pleasures, a freedom from solicitude about future ones, and a poignant zest of every present enjoyment, if they be not philosophy, are at least excellent substitutes. By this they are taught to regard the period in which they live, with admiration. The present manners, and the present conversation, surpass all that preceded. A similar enthusiasm as strongly tinctures their learning and their taste. While we, with a despondence characteristic of our nation, are for removing back British excellence to

the reign of Queen Elizabeth, our more happy rivals of the continent cry up the writers of the present times with rapture, and regard the age of Lewis XV. as the true Augustan age of France.

The truth is, their present writers have not fallen so far short of the merits of their ancestors as ours have done. That self-sufficiency now mentioned may have been of service to them in this particular. By fancying themselves superior to their ancestors, they have been encouraged to enter the lists with confidence; and by not being dazzled at the splendour of another's reputation, have sometimes had sagacity to mark out an unbeaten path to fame for themselves.

Other causes also may be assigned, that their second growth of genius is still more vigorous than ours. Their encouragements to merit, are more skilfully directed, the link of patronage and learning, still continues unbroken. The French nobility have certainly a most pleasing way of satisfying the vanity of an author, without indulging his avarice. A man of literary merit, is sure of being caressed by the great, though seldom enriched. His pension from the crown, just supplies half a competence, and the sale of his labours makes some small addition to his circumstances; thus the author leads a life of splendid poverty, and seldom becomes wealthy or indolent enough, to discontinue an exertion of those abilities, by which he rose. With the English it is different; our writers of rising merit, are generally neglected; while the few of an established reputation, are overpaid by luxurious affluence. The young encounter every hardship, which generally attends upon aspiring indigence; the old enjoy the vulgar, and perhaps the more prudent satisfaction, of putting riches in competition with fame. Those are often seen to spend their youth in want and obscurity; these are some-

times found to lead an old age of indolence and avarice. But such treatment must naturally be expected from Englishmen, whose national character it is to be slow and cautious in making friends, but violent in friendships once contracted. The English nobility, in short, are often known to give greater rewards to genius, than the French; who, however, are much more judicious in the application of their empty favours.

The fair sex in France, have also not a little contributed to prevent the decline of taste and literature, by expecting such qualifications in their admirers. A man of fashion at Paris, however contemptible we may think him here, must be acquainted with the reigning modes of philosophy, as well as of dress, to be able to entertain his mistress agreeably. The sprightly pedants are not to be caught by dumb show, by the squeeze of a hand, or the ogling of a broad eye: but must be pursued at once through all the labarynths of the Newtonian system, or the metaphysics of Locke. I have seen as bright a circle of beauty at the chymical lectures of Rouelle, as gracing the court at Versailles. And indeed wisdom never appears so charming, as when graced and protected by beauty.

To these advantages may be added the reception of their language in the different courts of Europe. An author who excels is sure of having all the polite for admirers, and is encouraged to write by the pleasing expectation of universal fame. Add to this, that those countries, who can make nothing good from their own language, have lately begun to write in this, some of whose productions contribute to support the present literary reputation of France.

There are therefore many among the French who do honour to the present age, and whose writings will

be transmitted to posterity with an ample share of fame; some of the most celebrated are as follow:

Voltaire, whose voluminous, yet spririted productions, are too well known to require an eulogy; does he not resemble the champion mentioned by Xenophon, of great reputation in all the gymnastic exercises united, but inferior to each champion singly, who excels only in one?

Montesquieu, a name equally deserving fame with the former; the Spirit of Laws is an instance how much genius is able to lead learning. His system has been adopted by the literari: and yet is it not possible for opinions equally plausible to be formed upon opposite principles, if a genius like his could be found to attempt such an undertaking? He seems more a poet than a philosopher.

Rousseau, of Geneva; a professed man-hater, or more properly speaking, a philosopher enraged with one half of mankind, because they unavoidably make the other half unhappy. Such sentiments are generally the result of much good nature and little experience.

Pyron, an author possessed of as much wit as any man alive, yet with as little prudence to turn it to his own advantage. A comedy of his, called La Metromanie, is the best theatrical production that has appeared of late in Europe. But I know not whether I should most commend his genius or censure his obscenity; his Ode à Priape, has justly excluded him from a place in the academy of Belles Lettres. However the good-natured Montesquieu, by his interest, procured the starving bard a trifling pension. His own epitaph was all the revenge he took upon the academy for being repulsed.

Cy Git Pyron qui ne fut jamais rien
Pas même Academicien.

Crebillon, junior; a writer of real merit, but guilty of the same indelicate faults with the former. Wit, employed in dressing up obscenity, is like the art used in painting a corpse; it may be thus rendered tolerable to one sense, but fails not quickly to offend some other.

Gresset is agreeable and easy. His comedy called the Mechant, and an humorous poem entitled Ververt, have original merit. He was bred a Jesuit, but his wit procured his dismission from the society. This last work particularly could expect no pardon from the convent, being a satire against nunneries!

Dalembert has united an extensive skill in scientifical learning with the most refined taste for the polite arts. His excellence in both has procured him a seat in each academy.

Diderot is an elegant writer, and subtil reasoner. He is the supposed author of the famous Thesis, which the Abbé Prade sustained before the doctors of the Sorbonne. It was levelled against Christianity, and the Sorbonne too hastily gave it their sanction. They perceived its purport, however, when it was too late. The college was brought into some contempt, and the abbé obliged to take refuge at the court of Berlin.

The Marquis D'Argens attempts to add the character of a philosopher to the vices of a debauchée.

The catalogue might be increased with several other authors of merit, such as Marivaux, Le Franc, Saint Foix, Destouches, and Modonville; but let it suffice to say, that by these the character of the present age is tolerably supported. Though their poets seldom rise to fine enthusiasm, they never sink into absurdity; though they fail to astonish, they are generally possessed of talents to please.

The age of Louis XIV. notwithstanding these re-

spectable names, is still vastly superior. For beside the general tendency of critical corruption, which shall be spoken of by and by, there are other symptoms which indicate a decline. There is, for instance, a fondness for scepticism, which runs through the works of some of their most applauded writers, and which the numerous class of their imitators have contributed to diffuse. Nothing can be a more certain sign, that genius is in the wane, than its being obliged to fly to paradox for support, and attempting to be erroneously agreeable. A man, who with all the impotence of wit, and all the eager desires of infidelity, writes against the religion of his country, may raise doubts, but will never give conviction; all he can do is to render society less happy than he found it. It was a good manner which the father of the late poet St. Foix took to reclaim his son from this juvenile error. The young poet had shut himself up for some time in his study, and his father, willing to know what had engaged his attention so closely, upon entering found him busied in drawing up a new system of religion, and endeavouring to show the absurdity of that already established. The old man knew by experience, that it was useless to endeavour to convince a vain young man by right reason, so only desired his company up stairs. When come into the father's apartment, he takes his son by the hand, and drawing back a curtain at one end of the room, discovered a crucifix exquisitely painted. "My son," says he, "you desire to change the religion of your "country, behold the fate of a reformer." The truth is, vanity is more apt to misguide men than false reasoning; as some had rather be conspicuous in a mob, than unnoticed even in a privy council, so others choose rather to be foremost in the retinue of error, than follow in the train of truth. What

influence the conduct of such writers may have on the morals of a people, is not my business here to determine. Certain I am, that it has a manifest tendency to subvert the literary merits of the country in view. The change of religion in every nation has hitherto produced barbarism and ignorance, and such will be probably its consequences in every future period. For when the laws and the opinions of society are made to clash, harmony is dissolved, and all the parts of peace unavoidably crushed in the encounter.

The writers of this country have also of late fallen into a method of considering every part of art and science as arising from simple principles. The success of Montesquieu, and one or two more, has induced all the subordinate ranks of genius into vicious imitation. To this end they turn to our view that side of the subject which contributes to support their hypothesis, while the objections are generally passed over in silence. Thus an universal system rises from a partial representation of the question, an whole is concluded from a part, a book appears entirely new, and the fancy-built fabric is styled for a short time very ingenious. In this manner we have seen of late almost every subject in morals, natural history, politics, economy, and commerce, treated; subjects naturally proceeding on many principles, and some even opposite to each other, are all taught to proceed along the line of systematic simplicity, and continue, like other agreeable falsehoods, extremely pleasing till they are detected.

I must still add another fault of a nature somewhat similar to the former. As those abovementioned are for contracting a single science into system, so those I am going to speak of, are for drawing up a system of all the sciences united. Such undertakings as these are carried on by different writers ce-

mented into one body, and concurring in the same design by the mediation of a bookseller. From these inauspicious combinations proceed those monsters of learning, the Trevoux, Encyclopedies, and Bibliotheques of the age. In making these, men of every rank in literature are employed, wits and dunces contribute their share, and Diderot, as well as Desmaretz, are candidates for oblivion. The genius of the first supplies the gale of favour, and the latter adds the useful ballast of stupidity. By such means, the enormous mass heavily makes its way among the public, and to borrow a bookseller's phrase, the whole impression moves off. These great collections of learning may serve to make us inwardly repine at our own ignorance, may serve, when gilt and lettered, to adorn the lower shelves of a regular library ; but wo to the reader, who, not daunted at the immense distance between one great pasteboard and the other, opens the volume and explores his way through a region so extensive, but barren of entertainment. No unexpected landscape there to delight the imagination; no diversity of prospect to cheat the painful journey; he sees the wide extended desert lie before him ; what is past only increases his terror of what is to come. His course is not half finished, he looks behind him with affright, and forward with despair. Perseverance is at last overcome, and a night of oblivion lends its friendly aid to terminate the perplexity.

CHAP. IX.

Of Learning in Great-Britain.

To acquire a character for learning among the English at present, it is necessary to know much more

than is either important or useful. It seems the spirit of the times for men here to exhaust their natural sagacity in exploring the intricacies of another man's thought, and thus never to have leisure to think for themselves; others have carried on learning from that stage, where the good sense of our ancestors have thought it too minute or too speculative to instruct or amuse. By the industry of such, the sciences, which in themselves are easy of access, affright the learner with the severity of their appearance. He sees them surrounded with speculation and subtilty, placed there by their professors, as if with a view of deterring his approach. Hence it happens, that the generality of readers fly from the scholar to the compiler, who offers them a more safe and speedy conveyance.

From this fault also arises that mutual contempt between the scholar and the man of the world, of which every day's experience furnisheth instances.

The man of taste, however, stands neutral in this controversy; he seems placed in a middle station, between the world and the cell, between learning and common sense. He teaches the vulgar on what part of a character to lay the emphasis of praise, and the scholar where to point his application so as to deserve it. By his means even the philosopher acquires popular applause, and all that are truly great the admiration of posterity. By means of polite learning alone the patriot and the hero, the man who praiseth virtue, and he who practises it, who fights successfully for his country, or who dies in its defence, becomes immortal. But this taste now seems cultivated with less ardour than formerly, and consequently the public must one day expect to see the advantages arising from it, and the exquisite pleasures it affords our leisure entirely annihilated. For if, as it should seem,

the rewards of genius are improperly directed; if those who are capable of supporting the honour of the times by their writings prefer opulence to fame; if the stage should be shut to writers of merit, and open only to interest or intrigue. If such should happen to be the vile complexion of the times, (and that it is nearly so we shall shortly see,) the very virtue of the age will be forgotten by posterity; and nothing remembered, except our filling a chasm in the registers of time, or having served to continue the species.

CHAP. X.

Of rewarding genius in England.

THERE is nothing authors are more apt to lament, than want of encouragement from the age. Whatever their differences in other respects, they are all ready to unite in this complaint, and each indirectly offers himself as an instance of the truth of his assertion.

The beneficed divine, whose wants are only imaginary, expostulates as bitterly as the poorest author. Should interest or good fortune advance the divine to a bishopric, or the poor son of Parnassus into that place which the other has resigned; both are authors no longer; the one goes to prayers once a day, kneels upon cushions of velvet, and thanks gracious Heaven for having made the circumstances of all mankind so extremely happy; the other battens on all the delicacies of life, enjoys his wife and his easy chair, and sometimes, for the sake of conversation, deplores the luxury of these degenerate days.

All encouragements to merit are therefore misapplied, which make the author too rich to continue his profession. There can be nothing more just than the old observation, that authors, like running horses, should be fed, but not fattened. If we would continue them in our service, we should reward them with a little money and a great deal of praise, still keeping their avarice subservient to their ambition. Not that I think a writer incapable of filling an employment with dignity. I would only insinuate, that when made a bishop or statesman, he will continue to please us as a writer no longer. As, to resume a former allusion, the running horse when fattened, will still be fit for very useful purposes, though unqualified for a courser.

No nation gives greater encouragements to learning than we do; yet at the same time none are so injudicious in the application. We seem to confer them with the same view that statesmen have been known to grant employments at court, rather as bribes to silence, than incentives to emulation.

Upon this principle, all our magnificent endowments of colleges are erroneous, and at best more frequently enrich the prudent than reward the ingenious. A lad, whose passions are not strong enough in youth to mislead him from that path of science which his tutors, and not his inclinations, have chalked out, by four or five years perseverance may probably obtain every advantage and honour his college can bestow. I forget whether the simile has been used before, but I would compare the man, whose youth has been thus past in the tranquillity of dispassionate prudence, to liquors which never ferment, and consequently continue always muddy. Passions may raise a commotion in the youthful breast, but they disturb only to refine it. However this be, mean talents are often

rewarded in colleges with an easy subsistance. The candidates for preferments of this kind often regard their admission as a patent for future indolence; so that a life begun in studious labour is often continued in luxurious indolence.

Among the universities abroad, I have ever observed their riches and their learning in a reciprocal proportion, their stupidity and pride increasing with their opulence. Happening once in conversation with Gaubius, of Leyden, to mention the college of Edinburgh, he began by complaining that all the English students which formerly came to his university, now went entirely there; and the fact surprised him more, as Leyden was now as well as ever furnished with masters excellent in their respective professions. He concluded by asking, if the professors of Edinburgh were rich. I replied, that the salary of a professor there seldom amounted to more than thirty pounds a year. Poor men, says he, I heartily wish they were better provided for; until they become rich we can have no expectation of English students at Leyden.

Premiums also, proposed for literary excellence, when given as encouragements to boys, may be useful; but when designed as rewards to men, are certainly misapplied. We have seldom seen a performance of any great merit, in consequence of rewards proposed in this manner. Who has ever observed a writer of any eminence a candidate in so precarious a contest? The man who knows the real value of his own genius will no more venture it upon an uncertainty, than he who knows the true use of a guinea, will stake it with a sharper.

Every encouragement given to stupidity, when known to be such, is also a negative insult upon genius. This appears in nothing more evident than the

undistinguished success of those who solicit subscriptions. When first brought into fashion, subscriptions were conferred upon the ingenious alone, or those who were reputed such. But at present, we see them made a resource of indigence, and requested not as rewards of merit, but as a relief of distress. If tradesmen happen to want skill in conducting their own business, yet they are able to write a book; if mechanics want money, or ladies shame, they write books and solicit subscriptions. Scarcely a morning passes, that proposals of this nature are not thrust into the half-opening doors of the rich, with perhaps a paltry petition, showing the author's wants, but not his merits. I would not willingly prevent that pity which is due to indigence, but while the streams of liberality are thus diffused, they must in the end become proportionably shallow.

What, then, are the proper encouragements of genius? I answer, subsistance and respect, for these are rewards congenial to its nature. Every animal has an aliment peculiarly suited to its constitution. The heavy ox seeks nourishment from earth; the light cameleon has been supposed to exist on air; a sparer diet even than this will satisfy the man of true genius, for he makes a luxurious banquet upon empty applause. It is this alone which has inspired all that ever was truly great and noble among us. It is, as Cicero finely calls it, the echo of virtue. Avarice is the passion of inferior natures; money the pay of the common herd. The author who draws his quill merely to take a purse, no more deserves success than he who presents a pistol.

When the link between patronage and learning was entire, then all who deserved fame, were in a capacity of attaining it. When the great Somers was at the helm, patronage was fashionable among our nobility.

The middle ranks of mankind, who generally imitate the Great, then followed their example, and applauded from fashion, if not from feeling. I have heard an old poet * of that glorious age say, that a dinner with his lordship, has procured him invitations for the whole week following; that an airing in his patron's chariot has supplied him with a citizen's coach, on every future occasion. For who would not be proud to entertain a man who kept so much good company?

But this link now seems entirely broken. Since the days of a certain prime minister of inglorious memory, the learned have been kept pretty much at a distance. A jockey, or a laced player, supplies the place of the scholar, poet, or the man of virtue. Those conversations, once the result of wisdom, wit, and innocence, are now turned to humbler topics, little more being expected from a companion, than a laced coat, a pliant bow, and an immoderate friendship for ——a well served table.

Wit, when neglected by the great, is generally despised by the vulgar. Those, who are unacquainted with the world, are apt to fancy the man of wit, as leading a very agreeable life. They conclude, perhaps, that he is attended to with silent admiration, and dictates to the rest of mankind, with all the eloquence of conscious superiority. Very different is his present situation. He is called an author, and all know that an author is a thing only to be laughed at. His person, not his jest, becomes the mirth of the company. At his approach, the most fat unthinking face, brightens into malicious meaning. Even aldermen laugh, and revenge on him the ridicule which was lavished on their forefathers:

* Dr. Young.

Etiam victis redit in præcordia virtus,
Victoresque cadunt.

It is indeed a reflection somewhat mortifying to the author, who breaks his ranks, and singles out for public favour, to think that he must combat contempt, before he can arrive at glory; that he must expect to have all the fools of society united against him, before he can hope for the applause of the judicious. For this, however, he must prepare beforehand; as those who have no idea of the difficulty of his employment, will be apt to regard his inactivity as idleness, and not having a notion of the pangs of uncomplying thought in themselves, it is not to be expected they should have any desire of rewarding it in others.

Voltaire has finely described the hardships a man must encounter, who writes for the public. I need make no apology for the length of the quotation.

'Your fate, my dear Le Fevre, is too strongly marked, to permit your retiring. The bee must toil in making honey, the silk-worm must spin, the philosopher must dissect them, and you are born to sing of their labours. You must be a poet and a scholar, even though your inclinations should resist; nature is too strong for inclination. But hope not, my friend, to find tranquillity in the employment you are going to pursue. The route of genius is not less obstructed with disappointment than that of ambition.

'If you have the misfortune not to excel in your profession as a poet, repentance must tincture all your future enjoyments. If you succeed, you make enemies. You tread a narrow path, contempt on one side, and hatred on the other, are ready to seize you upon the slightest deviation.

'But why must I be hated, you will perhaps reply, 'why must I be persecuted for having written a plea- 'sing poem, for having produced an applauded trage- 'dy, or for otherwise instructing or amusing mankind 'or myself?

'My dear friend, these very successes shall ren- 'der you miserable for life. Let me suppose your 'performance has merit, let me suppose you have 'surmounted the teizing employments of printing and 'publishing, how will you be able to lull the critics, 'who, like Cerberus, are posted at all the avenues of 'literature, and who settle the merits of every new 'performance. How, I say, will you be able to make 'them open in your favour? There are always three 'or four literary journals in France, as many in Hol- 'land, each supporting opposite interests. The book- 'sellers who guide these periodical compilations, find 'their account in being severe; the authors employ- 'ed by them, have wretchedness to add to their natural 'malignity. The majority may be in your favour, but 'you may depend on being torn by the rest. Loaded 'with unmerited scurrility, perhaps you reply; they 'rejoin; both plead at the bar of the public, and both 'are condemned to ridicule.

'But if you write for the stage, your case is still 'more worthy compassion. You are there to be judg- 'ed by men whom the custom of the times has render- 'ed contemptible. Irritated by their own inferiority, 'they exert all their little tyranny upon you, revenging 'upon the author, the insults they receive from the 'public. From such men then you are to expect your 'sentence. Suppose your piece admitted, acted; one 'single ill-natured jest from the pit, is sufficient to 'cancel all your labours. But allowing that it suc- 'ceeds: There are an hundred squibs flying all 'abroad, to prove that it should not have succeeded.

'You shall find your brightest scenes burlesqued by 'the ignorant; and the learned who know a little 'Greek, and nothing of their native language, affect to 'despise you.

'But perhaps with a panting heart you carry your 'piece before a woman of quality. She gives the la- 'bours of your brain to her maid to be cut into shreds 'for curling her hair; while the laced footman, who 'carries the gaudy livery of luxury, insults your ap- 'pearance, who bear the livery of indigence.

'But granting your excellence has at last forced 'envy to confess that your works have some merit; 'this then is all the reward you can expect while liv- 'ing. However, for this tribute of applause, you 'must expect persecution. You will be reputed the 'author of scandal which you have never seen, of 'verses you despise, and of sentiments directly 'contrary to your own. In short, you must embark 'in some one party, or all parties will be against 'you.

'There are among us a number of learned societies, 'where a lady presides, whose wit begins to twinkle, 'when the splendour of her beauty begins to decline. 'One or two men of learning, compose her ministers 'of state. These must be flattered, or made ene- 'mies by being neglected. Thus though you had the 'merit of all antiquity united in your person, you grow 'old in misery and disgrace. Every place designed 'for men of letters, is filled up by men of intrigue. 'Some nobleman's private tutor, some court flat- 'terer, shall bear away the prize, and leave you to an- 'guish and to disappointment.'

Yet it were well if none but the dunces of society were combined to render the profession of an author ridiculous or unhappy. Men of the first eminence are often found to indulge this illiberal vein of raillery.

Two contending writers often, by the opposition of their wit, render their profession contemptible in the eyes of ignorant persons, who should have been taught to admire. And yet, whatever the reader may think of himself, it is at least two to one but he is a greater blockhead than the most scribbling dunce he affects to despise.

The poet's poverty is a standing topic of contempt. His writing for bread is an unpardonable offence. Perhaps of all mankind an author in these times is used most hardly. We keep him poor, and yet revile his poverty. Like angry parents who correct their children till they cry, and then correct them for crying, we reproach him for living by his wit, and yet allow him no other means to live.

His taking refuge in garrets and cellars has of late been violently objected to him, and that by men who I dare hope are more apt to pity than insult his distress. Is poverty the writer's fault? No doubt he knows how to prefer a bottle of champaign to the nectar of the neighbouring ale-house, or a venison pasty to a plate of potatoes. Want of delicacy is not in him but in us, who deny him the opportunity of making an elegant choice.

Wit certainly is the property of those who have it, nor should we be displeased if it is the only property a man sometimes has. We must not under-rate him who uses it for subsistence, and flies from the ingratitude of the age even to a bookseller for redress. If the profession of an author is to be laughed at by the stupid, it is certainly better to be contemptibly rich than contemptibly poor. For all the wit that ever adorned the human mind will at present no more shield the author's poverty from ridicule, than his high-topped gloves conceal the unavoidable omissions of his laundress.

To be more serious; new fashions, follies, and vices,

make new monitors necessary in every age. An author may be considered as a merciful substitute to the legislature; he acts not by punishing crimes but preventing them; however virtuous the present age, there may be still growing employment for ridicule or reproof, for persuasion or satire. If the author be therefore still so necessary among us, let us treat him with proper consideration as a child of the public, not a rent-charge on the community. And indeed a *child* of the public he is in all respects; for while so well able to direct others, how incapable is he frequently found of guiding himself! His simplicity exposes him to all the insidious approaches of cunning; his sensibility to the slightest invasions of contempt. Though possessed of fortitude to stand unmoved the expected bursts of an earthquake, yet of feelings so exquisitely poignant as to agonize under the slightest disappointment. Broken rest, tasteless meals, and causeless anxiety, shorten his life, or render it unfit for active employment; prolonged vigils and intense application still farther contract his span, and make his time glide insensibly away. Let us not then aggravate those natural inconveniences by neglect; we have had sufficient instances of this kind already. Sale and Moore will suffice for one age at least. But they are dead, and their sorrows are over. The neglected author of the Persian eclogues, which however inaccurate, excel any in our language, is still alive. Happy, if *insensible* of our neglect, not *raging* at our ingratitude *.

It is enough that the age has already produced instances of men pressing foremost in the lists of fame, and worthy of better times, schooled by continued adversity into an hatred of their kind, flying from thought

* Our author here alludes to the insanity of Collins.

to drunkenness, yielding to the united pressure of labour, penury, and sorrow, sinking unheeded, without one friend to drop a tear on their unattended obsequies, and indebted to charity for a grave.

The author, when unpatronized by the Great, has naturally recourse to the bookseller. There cannot be perhaps imagined a combination more prejudicial to taste than this. It is the interest of the one to allow as little for writing, and of the other to write as much as possible; accordingly tedious compilations and periodical magazines are the result of their joint endeavours. In these circumstances the author bids adieu to fame, writes for bread, and for that only imagination is seldom called in; he sits down to address the venal muse with the most phlegmatic apathy; and, as we are told of the Russian, courts his mistress by falling asleep in her lap. His reputation never spreads in a wider circle than that of the trade, who generally value him, not for the fineness of his compositions, but the quantity he works off in a given time.

A long habit of writing for bread thus turns the ambition of every author at last into avarice. He finds that he has written many years, that the public are scarcely acquainted even with his name; he despairs of applause, and turns to profit, which invites him. He finds that money procures all those advantages, that respect, and that ease which he vainly expected from fame. Thus the man who, under the protection of the Great might have done honour to humanity, when only patronised by the bookseller, becomes a thing little superior to the fellow who works at the press.

CHAP. XI.

Of the marks of literary decay in France and England.

THE faults already mentioned, are such as learning is often found to flourish under; but there is one of a much more dangerous nature which has begun to fix itself among us, I mean criticism, which may properly be called the natural destroyer of polite learning. We have seen that Critics, or those whose only business is to write books upon other books, are always more numerous as learning is more diffused; and experience has shown, that instead of promoting its interest, which they profess to do, they generally injure it. This decay which criticism produces may be deplored, but can scarcely be remedied, as the man who writes against the critics is obliged to add himself to the number. Other depravations in the republic of letters, such as affectation in some popular writer, leading others into vicious imitation; political struggles in the state; a depravity of morals among the people; ill-directed encouragement, or no encouragement from the Great, these have been often found to co-operate in the decline of literature; and it has sometimes declined, as in modern Italy, without them; but an increase of criticism has always portended a decay. Of all misfortunes therefore, in the commonwealth of letters, this of judging from rule, and not from feeling, is the most severe. At such a tribunal, no work of original merit can please. Sublimity, if carried to an exalted height, approaches burlesque, and humour sinks into vulgarity; the person who cannot feel may ridicule both as such, and bring rules

to corroborate his assertion. There is, in short, no excellence in writing, that such judges may not place among the neighbouring defects. Rules render the reader more difficult to be pleased, and abridge the author's power of pleasing.

If we turn to either country, we shall perceive evident symptoms of this natural decay beginning to appear. Upon a moderate calculation, there seems to be as many volumes of criticism published in those countries as of all other kinds of polite erudition united. Paris sends forth not less than four literary journals every month, the Anné-literaire, and the Fuille by Freron, the Journal Etrangere by the Chevalier D'Arc, and Le Mercure by Marmontel. We have two literary reviews in London, with critical newspapers and magazines without number. The compilers of these resemble the commoners of Rome; they are all for levelling property, not by increasing their own, but by diminishing that of others. The man who has any good nature in his disposition must, however, be somewhat displeased to see distinguished reputations often the sport of ignorance. To see by one false pleasantry the future peace of a worthy man's life disturbed, and this only because he has unsuccessfully attempted to instruct or amuse us. Though ill-nature is far from being wit, yet it is generally laughed at as such. The critic enjoys the triumph, and ascribes to his parts what is only due to his effrontery. I fire with indignation when I see persons wholly destitute of education and genius indent to the press, and thus turn book-makers, adding to the sin of criticism the sin of ignorance also; whose trade is a bad one, and who are bad workmen in the trade.

When I consider those industrious men as indebted to the works of others for a precarious subsistence,

when I see them coming down at stated intervals to rummage the bookseller's compter for materials to work upon; it raises a smile, though mixed with pity. It reminds me of an animal called by naturalists the soldier. This little creature, says the historian, is passionately fond of a shell, but not being supplied with one by nature, has recourse to the deserted shell of some other. I have seen these harmless reptiles, continues he, come down once a-year from the mountains, rank and file, cover the whole shore, and ply busily about, each in request of a shell to please it. Nothing can be more amusing than their industry upon this occasion. One shell is too big, another too little, they enter and keep possession sometimes for a good while, until one is, at last, found entirely to please. When all are thus properly equipped, they march up again to the mountains, and live in their new acquisition till under a necessity of changing.

There is indeed scarcely an error of which our present writers are guilty, that does not arise from their opposing systems, there is scarcely an error that criticism cannot be brought to excuse. From this proceeds the affected security of our odes, the tuneless flow of our blank verse, the pompous epithet, laboured diction, and every other deviation from common sense, which procures the poet the applause of the month; he is praised by all, read by a few, and soon forgotten.

There never was an unbeaten path trodden by the poet that the critic did not endeavour to reclaim him, by calling his attempt innovation. This might be instanced in Dante, who first followed nature, and was persecuted by the critics as long as he lived. Thus novelty, one of the greatest beauties in poetry, must be avoided, or the connoisseur be displeased. It is one of the chief privileges, however, of genius, to fly

from the herd of imitators by some happy singularity; for should he stand still, his heavy pursuers will at length certainly come up, and fairly dispute the victory

The ingenious Mr. Hogarth used to assert, that every one, except the connoisseur, was a judge of painting. The same may be asserted of writing; the public in general set the whole piece in the proper point of view; the critic lays his eye close to all its minuteness, and condemns or approves in detail. And this may be the reason why so many writers at present are apt to appeal from the tribunal of criticism to that of the people.

From a desire in the critic of grafting the spirit of ancient languages upon the English, have proceeded of late several disagreeable instances of pedantry. Among the number I think we may reckon blank verse. Nothing but the greatest sublimity of subject can render such a measure pleasing; however, we now see it used upon the most trivial occasions; it has particularly found its way into our didactic poetry, and is likely to bring that species of composition into disrepute, for which the English are deservedly famous.

Those who are acquainted with writing, know that our language runs almost naturally into blank verse. The writers of our novels, romances, and all of this class, who have no notion of style, naturally hobble into this unharmonious measure. If rhymes, therefore, be more difficult, for that very reason I would have our poets write in rhyme. Such a restriction upon the thought of a good poet often lifts and increases the vehemence of every sentiment; for fancy, like a fountain, plays highest by diminishing the aperture. But rhymes, it will be said, are a remnant of monkish stupidity, an innovation upon the poetry of the ancients. They are but indifferently acquainted with

antiquity who make the assertion. Rhymes are probably of older date than either the Greek or Latin dactyl and spondê. The Celtic, which is allowed to be the first language spoken in Europe, has ever preserved them, as we may find in the Edda of Iceland, and the Irish carrols still sung among the original inhabitants of that island. Olaus Wormius gives us some of the Teutonic poetry in this way; and Pantoppidan, Bishop of Bergen, some of the Norwegian; in short, this jingle of sounds is almost natural to mankind, at least it is so to our language, if we may judge from many unsuccessful attempts to throw it off.

I should not have employed so much time in opposing this erroneous innovation, if it were not apt to introduce another in its train: I mean a disgusting solemnity of manner into our poetry; and as the prose writer has been ever found to follow the poet, it must consequently banish in both all that agreeable trifling, which, if I may so express it, often deceives us into instruction. The finest sentiment and the most weighty truth may put on a pleasant face, and it is even virtuous to jest when serious advice must be disgusting. But instead of this, the most trifling performance among us now assumes all the didactic stiffness of wisdom. The most diminutive son of fame or of famine has his *we* and his *us*, his *firstlys* and his *secondlys*, as methodical as if bound in cowhide and closed with clasps of brass. Were these Monthly Reviews and Magazines frothy, pert, or absurd, they might find some pardon; but to be dull and dronish is an encroachment on the prerogative of a folio. These things should be considered as pills to purge melancholy; they should be made up in our splenetic climate to be taken as physic, and not so as to be used when we take it.

However, by the power of one single monosyllable, our critics have almost got the victory over humour amongst us. Does the poet paint the absurdities of the vulgar, then he is *low:* does he exaggerate the features of folly, to render it more thoroughly ridiculous, he is then very *low.* In short, they have proscribed the comic or satyrical muse from every walk but high life, which, though abounding in fools as well as the humblest station, is by no means so fruitful in absurdity. Among well-bred fools we may despise much, but have little to laugh at; nature seems to present us with an universal blank of silk, ribbands, smiles, and whispers: absurdity is the poet's game, and good-breeding is the nice concealment of absurdities. The truth is, the critic generally mistakes humour for wit, which is a very different excellence. Wit raises human nature above its level; humour acts a contrary part, and equally depresses it. To expect exalted humour is a contradiction in terms; and the critic, by demanding an impossibility from the comic poet, has in effect banished new comedy from the stage. But, to put the same thought in a different light; when an unexpected similitude in two objects strikes the imagination; in other words, when a thing is *wittily* expressed, all our pleasure turns into admiration of the artist, who had fancy enough to draw the picture. When a thing is *humourously* described, our burst of laughter proceeds from a very different cause; we compare the absurdity of the character represented with our own, and triumph in our conscious superiority. No natural defect can be a cause of laughter, because it is a misfortune to which ourselves are liable; a defect of this kind changes the passion into pity or horror; we only laugh at those instances of moral absurdity, to which we are conscious we ourselves are not liable. For in-

stance, should I describe a man as wanting his nose, there is no humour in this, as it is an accident to which human nature is subject, and may be any man's case: but should I represent this man without his nose as extremely curious in the choice of his snuff-box, we here see him guilty of an absurdity, of which we imagine it impossible for ourselves to be guilty, and therefore applaud our own good sense on the comparison. Thus then the pleasure we receive from wit turns on the admiration of another; that which we feel from humour centres in the admiration of ourselves. The poet, therefore, must place the object he would have the subject of humour in a state of inferiority; in other words, the subject of humour must be low.

The solemnity worn by many of our modern writers is, I fear, often the mask of dulness; for certain it is, it seems to fit every author who pleases to put it on. By the complexion of many of our late publications, one might be apt to cry out with Cicero, *Civem mehercule non puto esse qui his temporibus ridere possit.* On my conscience, I believe we have all forgot to laugh in these days. Such writers probably make no distinction between what is praised and what is pleasing; between those commendations which the reader pays his own discernment, and those which are the genuine result of his sensations. It were to be wished, therefore, that we no longer found pleasure with the inflated style that has for some years been looked upon as fine writing, and which every young writer is now obliged to adopt, if he chooses to be read. We should now dispense with loaded epithet and dressing up trifles with dignity. For to use an obvious instance, it is not those who make the greatest noise with their wares in the streets that have most to sell. Let us, instead of writing finely, try to write naturally: not hunt after

lofty expressions to deliver mean ideas, nor be for ever gaping, when we only mean to deliver a whisper.

CHAP. XII.

Of the STAGE.

OUR Theatre has been generally confessed to share in this general decline, though partaking of the show and decoration of the Italian opera, with the propriety and declamation of French performance. The stage also is more magnificent with us, than any other in Europe, and the people in general, fonder of theatrical entertainment. Yet still as our pleasures as well as more important concerns, are generally managed by party; the stage has felt its influence. The managers, and all who espouse their side, are for decoration and ornament; the critic, and all who have studied French decorum, are for regularity and declamation. Thus it is almost impossible to please both parties; and the poet by attempting it, finds himself often incapable of pleasing either. If he introduces stage pomp, the critic consigns his performance to the vulgar; if he indulges in recital and simplicity, it is accused of insipidity or dry affectation.

From the nature therefore of our theatre, and the genius of our country, it is extremely difficult for a dramatic poet to please his audience. But happy would he be, were these the only difficulties he had to encounter; there are many other more dangerous combinations against the little wit of the age. Our poet's performance must undergo a process truly chy-

mical, before it is presented to the public. It must be tried in the manager's fire, strained through a licenser, suffer from repeated corrections, till it may be a mere *caput mortuum* when it arrives before the public.

The success, however, of pieces upon the stage, would be of little moment, did it not influence the success of the same piece in the closet. Nay, I think it would be more for the interests of virtue, if stage performances were read, not acted; made rather our companions in the cabinet, than on the theatre. While we are readers, every moral sentiment strikes us in all its beauty, but the love scenes are frigid, tawdry, and disgusting. When we are spectators, all the persuasives to vice, receive an additional lustre. The love scene is aggravated, the obscenity heightened, the best actors figure in the most debauched characters, while the parts of morality, as they are called, are thrown to some mouthing machine, who puts even virtue out of countenance, by his wretched imitation.

But whatever be the incentives to vice, which are found at the theatre, public pleasures are generally less guilty, than solitary ones. To make our solitary satisfactions truly innocent, the actor is useful, as by his means, the poet's work makes its way from the stage to the closet, for all must allow that the reader receives more benefit by perusing a well-written play, than by seeing it acted.

But how is this rule inverted on our theatres at present? Old pieces are revived, and scarcely any new ones admitted; the actor is ever in our eye, and the poet seldom permitted to appear; the public are again obliged to ruminate over those hashes of absurdity, which were disgusting to our ancestors, even in an age of ignorance; and the stage, instead of serv-

ing the people, is made subservient to the interests of avarice.

We seem to be pretty much in the situation of travellers at a Scotch inn; vile entertainment is served up, complained of, and sent down; up comes worse, and that also is changed, and every change makes our wretched cheer more unsavoury. What must be done? Only sit down contented, cry up all that comes before us, and admire even the absurdities of Shakspeare.

Let the reader suspend his censure; I admire the beauties of this great father of our stage, as much as they deserve, but could wish for the honour of our country, and for his honour too, that many of his scenes were forgotten. A man blind of one eye, should always be painted in profile. Let the spectator, who assists at any of these new revived pieces, only ask himself, whether he would approve such a performance, if written by a modern poet? I fear he will find, that much of his applause proceeds merely from the sound of a name, and an empty veneration for antiquity. In fact, the revival of those pieces of forced humour, far-fetched conceit, and unnatural hyperbole, which have been ascribed to Shakspeare, is rather gibbetting, than raising a statue to his memory; it is rather a trick of the actor, who thinks it safest acting in exaggerated characters, and who, by outstepping nature, chooses to exhibit the ridiculous outré of an harlequin, under the sanction of that venerable name.

What strange wamped comedies, farcical tragedies, or what shall I call them, speaking pantomimes, have we not of late seen? No matter what the play may be, it is the actor who draws an audience. He throws life into all; all are in spirits, and merry, in at one door, and out at another; the spectator, in a fool's

paradise, knows not what all this means, till the last act concludes in matrimony. The piece pleases our critics, because it talks old English; and it pleases the galleries, because it has ribaldry. True taste, or even common sense, are out of the question.

But great art must be sometimes used before they can thus impose upon the public. To this purpose a prologue written with some spirit generally precedes the piece, to inform us, that it was composed by Shakspeare, or old Ben, or somebedy else who took them for his model. A face of iron could not have the assurance to avow dislike; the theatre has its partizans, who understand the force of combinations, trained up to vociferation, clapping of hands, and clattering of sticks; and though a man might have strength sufficient to overcome a lion in single combat, he may run the risk of being devoured by an army of ants.

I am not insensible, that third nights are disagreeable drawbacks upon the annual profits of the stage; I am confident it is much more to the manager's advantage, to furbish up all the lumber which the good sense of our ancestors, but for his care, had consigned to oblivion; it is not with him therefore, but with the public, I would expostulate; they have a right to demand respect, and surely those newly-revived plays are no instances of the manager's deference.

I have been informed that no new play can be admitted upon our theatres, unless the author chooses to wait some years, or to use the phrase in fashion, till it comes to be played in turn. A poet thus can never expect to contract a familiarity with the stage, by which alone he can hope to succeed, nor can the most signal success relieve immediate want. Our Saxon ancestors had but one name for a wit and a witch. I will not dispute the propriety of uniting those charac-

ters then; but the man, who, under the present discouragements, ventures to write for the stage, whatever claim he may have to the appellation of a wit, at least he has no right to be called a conjuror.

From all that has been said upon the state of our theatre, we may easily foresee whether it is likely to improve or decline; and whether the free-born muse can bear to submit to those restrictions which avarice or power would impose. For the future, it is somewhat unlikely, that he whose labours are valuable, or who knows their value, will turn to the stage for either fame or subsistence, when he must at once flatter an actor, and please an audience.

CHAP. XIII.

On UNIVERSITIES.

INSTEAD of losing myself in a subject of such extent, I shall only offer a few thoughts as they occur, and leave their connexion to the reader.

We seem divided, whether an education formed by travelling or by a sedentary life be preferable. We see more of the world by travel, but more of human nature by remaining at home. As in an infirmary the student, who only attends to the disorders of a few patients, is more likely to understand his profession, than he who indiscriminately examines them all.

A youth just landed at the Brille resembles a clown at a puppet-show; carries his amazement from one miracle to another; from this cabinet of curiosities to that collection of pictures; but wondering is not the way to grow wise.

Whatever resolutions we set ourselves not to keep company with our countrymen abroad, we shall find them broken when once we leave home. Among strangers we consider ourselves as in a solitude, and it is but natural to desire society.

In all the great towns of Europe there are to be found Englishmen residing, either from interest or choice; these generally lead a life of continued debauchery; such are the countrymen a traveller is likely to meet with.

This may be the reason why Englishmen are all thought to be mad or melancholy by the vulgar abroad. Their money is giddily and merrily spent among sharpers of their own country; and when that is gone, of all nations the English bear worst that disorder called the *malade du poche*.

Countries wear very different appearances to travellers of different circumstances. A man who is whirled through Europe in a post-chaise, and the pilgrim who walks the grand tour on foot, will form very different conclusions *.

To see Europe with advantage a man should appear in various circumstances of fortune, but the experiment would be too dangerous for young men.

There are many things relative to other countries which can be learned to more advantage at home; their laws and policies are among the number.

The greatest advantages which result to youth from travel, are an easy address, the shaking off national prejudices, and the finding nothing ridiculous in national peculiarities. The time spent in these acquisitions could have been more usefully employed at

* In the first edition our author added, *Haud inexpertus loquor;* for he travelled through France, &c. on foot.

home. An education in a college seems therefore preferable.

We attribute to universities either too much or too little. Some assert that they are the only proper places to advance learning; while others deny even their utility in forming an education. Both are erroneous.

Learning is most advanced in populous cities, where chance often conspires with industry to promote it; where the members of this large university, if I may so call it, catch manners as they rise, study life, not logic, and have the world for correspondents.

The greatest number of universities, have ever been founded in times of the greatest ignorance.

New improvements in learning, are seldom adopted in colleges, until admitted every where else. And this is right; we should always be cautious of teaching the rising generation uncertainties for truth; thus, though the professors in universities have been too frequently found to oppose the advancement of learning; yet when once established, they are the properest persons to diffuse it.

There is more knowledge to be acquired from one page of the volume of mankind, if the scholar only knows how to read, than in volumes of antiquity; we grow learned, not wise, by too long a continuance at college.

This points out the time in which we should leave the university; perhaps the age of twenty-one, when at our universities the first degree is generally taken, is the proper period.

The universities of Europe, may be divided into three classes. Those upon the old scholastic establishment, where the pupils are immured, talk nothing but Latin, and support every day syllogistical disputations in school philosophy. Would not one be apt to

imagine this was the proper education to make a man a fool! Such are the universities of Prague, Louvain, and Padua. The second is, where the pupils are under few restrictions, where all scholastic jargon is banished, where they take a degree when they think proper, and live not in the college, but city. Such are Edinburgh, Leyden, Gottingen, Geneva. The third is a mixture of the two former, where the pupils are restrained, but not confined; where many, though not all the absurdities of scholastic philosophy, are suppressed, and where the first degree is taken after four years matriculation. Such are Oxford, Cambridge, and Dublin.

As for the first class, their absurdities are too apparent to admit of a parallel. It is disputed which of the two last are more conducive to national improvement.

Skill in the professions is acquired more by practice, than study, two or three years may be sufficient for learning their rudiments. The universities of Edinburgh, &c. grant a licence for practising them when the student thinks proper, which our universities refuse, till after a residence of several years.

The dignity of the professions may be supported by this dilatory proceeding; but many men of learning are thus too long excluded from the lucrative advantages, which superior skill has a right to expect.

Those universities must certainly be most frequented, which promise to give in two years the advantages which others will not under twelve.

The man who has studied a profession for three years, and practised it for nine more, will certainly know more of his business, than he who has only studied it for twelve.

The universities of Edinburgh, &c. must certainly be most proper for the study of those professions in

which men choose to turn their learning to profit as soon as possible.

The universities of Oxford, &c. are improper for this, since they keep the student from the world, which after a certain time is the only true school of improvement.

When a degree in the professions can be taken only by men of independent fortunes, the number of candidates in learning is lessened, and consequently the advancement of learning retarded.

This slowness of conferring degrees is a remnant of scholastic barbarity. Paris, Louvain, and those universities which still retain their ancient institutions, confer the doctor's degree slower even than we.

The statutes of every university should be considered as adapted to the laws of its respective government. Those should alter as these happen to fluctuate.

Four years spent in the arts (as they are called in colleges) is perhaps laying too laborious a foundation. Entering a profession without any previous acquisitions of this kind, is building too bold a superstructure.

Teaching by lecture, as at Edinburgh, may make men scholars if they think proper; but instructing by examination, as at Oxford, will make them so, often against their inclination.

Edinburgh only disposes the student to receive learning; Oxford often makes him actually learned.

In a word, were I poor I should send my son to Leyden or Edinburgh, though the annual expense in each, particularly in the first, is very great. Were I rich I would send him to one of our own universities. By an education received in the first, he has the best likelihood of living; by that received in the latter, he has the best chance of becoming great.

We have of late heard much of the necessity of

studying oratory. Vespasian was the first who paid professors of rhetoric for publicly instructing youth at Rome. However, those pedants never made an orator.

The best orations that ever were spoken were pronounced in the parliaments of King Charles the First. These men never studied the rules of oratory.

Mathematics are, perhaps, too much studied at our universities. This seems a science to which the meanest intellects are equal. I forget who it is that says, "All men might understand mathematics if "they would."

The most methodical manner of lecturing, whether on morals or nature, is first rationally to explain, and then produce the experiment. The most instructive method is to show the experiment first; curiosity is then excited, and attention awakened to every subsequent deduction. Hence it is evident, that in a well-formed education a course of history should ever precede a course of ethics.

The sons of our nobility are permitted to enjoy greater liberties in our universities than those of private men. I should blush to ask the men of learning and virtue, who preside in our seminaries, the reason of such a prejudicial distinction. Our youth should there be inspired with a love of philosophy; and the first maxim among philosophers is, That merit only makes distinction.

Whence has proceeded the vain magnificence of expensive architecture in our colleges? Is it that men study to more advantage in a palace than in a cell? One single performance of taste or genius confers more real honours on its parent university, than all the labours of the chissel.

Surely, pride itself has dictated to the fellows of our colleges the absurd passion of being attended at

meals, and on other public occasions, by those poor men who, willing to be scholars, come in upon some charitable foundation. It implies a contradiction, for men to be at once learning the *liberal* arts, and at the same time treated as *slaves;* at once studying freedom and practising servitude.

CHAP. XIV.

The CONCLUSION.

EVERY subject acquires an adventitious importance to him who considers it with application. He finds it more closely connected with human happiness than the rest of mankind are apt to allow; he sees consequences resulting from it which do not strike others with equal conviction; and still pursuing speculation beyond the bounds of reason, too frequently becomes ridiculously earnest in trifles or absurdity.

It will perhaps be incurring this imputation, to deduce an universal degeneracy of manners from so slight an origin as the deprivation of taste; to assert that, as a nation grows dull, it sinks into debauchery. Yet such probably may be the consequence of literary decay; or not to stretch the thought beyond what it will bear, vice and stupidity are always mutually productive of each other.

Life, at the greatest and best, has been compared to a froward child, that must be humoured and played with till it falls asleep, and then all the care is over. Our few years are laboured away in varying its pleasures; new amusements are pursued with studious

attention; the most childish vanities are dignified with titles of importance; and the proudest boast of the most aspiring philosopher is no more than that he provides his little playfellows the greatest pastime with the greatest innocence.

Thus the mind, ever wandering after amusement, when abridged of happiness on one part, endeavours to find it on another; when intellectual pleasures are disagreeable, those of sense will take the lead. The man, who in this age is enamoured of the tranquil joys of study and retirement, may in the next, should learning be fashionable no longer, feel an ambition of being foremost at an horse-course; or, if such could be the absurdity of the times, of being himself a jockey. Reason and appetite are therefore masters of our revels in turn; and as we incline to the one or pursue the other, we rival angels or imitate the brutes. In the pursuit of intellectual pleasure lies every virtue; of sensual, every vice.

It is this difference of pursuit which marks the morals and characters of mankind; which lays the line between the enlightened philosopher and the half-taught citizen; between the civil citizen and illiterate peasant; between the law-obeying peasant and the wandering savage of Africa, an animal less mischievous indeed than the tiger, because endued with fewer powers of doing mischief. The man, the nation, must therefore be good, whose chiefest luxuries consist in the refinement of reason: and reason can never be universally cultivated unless guided by taste, which may be considered as the link between science and common sense, the medium through which learning should ever be seen by society.

Taste will therefore often be a proper standard, when others fail, to judge of a nation's improvement or degeneracy in morals. We have often no perma-

nent characteristics, by which to compare the virtues or the vices of our ancestors with our own. A generation may rise and pass away without leaving any traces of what it really was; and all complaints of our deterioration may be only topics of declamation, or the cavillings of disappointment: but in Taste we have standing evidence; we can with precision compare the literary performances of our fathers with our own, and from their excellence or defects determine the moral, as well as the literary, merits of either.

If, then, there ever comes a time when Taste is so far depraved among us, that critics shall load every work of genius with unnecessary comment, and quarter their empty performances with the substantial merit of an author, both for subsistence and applause; if there comes a time when censure shall speak in storms, but praise be whispered in the breeze, while real excellence often finds shipwreck in either; if there be a time when the Muse shall seldom be heard, except in plaintive elegy, as if she wept her own decline, while lazy compilations supply the place of original thinking; should there ever be such a time, may succeeding critics, both for the honour of our morals as well as our learning, say, that such a period bears no resemblance to the present age!

THE

LIFE

OF

THOMAS PARNELL, D. D.

ARCHDEACON OF CLOGHER,

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1770.

THE

LIFE

OF

DR. PARNELL.

THE life of a scholar, seldom abounds with adventure. His fame is acquired in solitude. And the historian, who only views him at a distance, must be content with a dry detail of actions, by which he is scarcely distinguished from the rest of mankind. But we are fond of talking of those who have given us pleasure, not that we have any thing important to say, but because the subject is pleasing.

THOMAS PARNELL, D. D. was descended from an ancient family, that had for some centuries been settled at Congleton, in Cheshire. His father, Thomas Parnell, who had been attached to the commonwealth party, upon the restoration, went over to Ireland; thither he carried a large personal fortune, which he laid out in lands in that kingdom. The estates he purchased there, as also that of which he was possessed in Cheshire, descended to our poet, who was his eldest son, and still remain in the family. Thus, want, which has compelled many of our greatest men

into the service of the muses, had no influence upon Parnell; he was a poet by inclination.

He was born in Dublin, in the year 1679, and received the first rudiments of his education at the school of Doctor Jones, in that city. Surprising things are told us of the greatness of his memory at that early period, as of his being able to repeat by heart, forty lines of any book, at the first reading; of his getting the third book of the Iliad, in one night's time, which was given in order to confine him for some days. These stories, which are told of almost every celebrated wit, may perhaps be true. But for my own part, I never found any of those prodigies of parts, although I have known enow that were desirous, among the ignorant, of being thought so.

There is one presumption, however, of the early maturity of his understanding. He was admitted a member of the College of Dublin, at the age of thirteen, which is much sooner than usual, as at that University, they are a great deal stricter in their examination for entrance, than either at Oxford or Cambridge. His progress through the college course of study, was probably marked with but little splendour; his imagination might have been too warm to relish the cold logic of Burgersdicius, or the dreary subtleties of Smiglesius: but it is certain, that, as a classical scholar, few could equal him. His own compositions show this, and the deference which the most eminent men of his time paid him upon that head, put it beyond a doubt. He took the degree of Master of Arts, the ninth of July, 1700; and in the same year he was ordained a Deacon, by William bishop of Derry, having a dispensation from the Primate, as being under twenty-three years of age. He was admitted into Priest's Orders about three years after, by William archbishop of Dublin; and on the ninth

of February, 1705, he was collated by Sir George Ashe, bishop of Clogher, to the archdeaconry of Clogher. About that time also he married Miss Anne Minchin, a young lady of great merit and beauty, by whom he had two sons, who died young, and one daughter, who is still living. His wife died some time before him; and her death is said to have made so great an impression on his spirits, that it served to hasten his own. On the thirty-first of May, 1716, he was presented by his friend and patron Archbishop King, to the vicarage of Finglass, a benifice worth about four hundred pounds a year, in the diocese of Dublin, but he lived to enjoy his preferment a very short time. He died at Chester, in July, 1717, on his way to Ireland, and was buried in Trinity church, in that town, without any monument to mark the place of his interment. As he died without male issue, his estate devolved to his only nephew, Sir John Parnell, Baronet, whose father was younger brother to the Archdeacon, and one of the Justices of the King's Bench in Ireland.

Such is the very unpoetical detail of the life of a poet. Some dates, and some few acts scarcely more interesting than those that make the ornaments of a country tomb-stone, are all that remain of one, whose labours now begin to excite universal curiosity. A poet, while living, is seldom an object sufficiently great to attract much attention; his real merits are known but to a few, and these are generally sparing in their praises. When his fame is increased by time, it is then too late to investigate the peculiarities of his disposition; the dews of the morning are past, and we vainly try to continue the chase by the meridian splendour.

There is scarcely any man, but might be made the subject of a very interesting and amusing history, if

the writer, besides a thorough acquaintance with the character he draws, were able to make those nice distinctions which separate it from all others. The strongest minds have usually the most striking peculiarities, and would consequently afford the richest materials: but in the present instance, from not knowing Doctor Parnell, his peculiarities are gone to the grave with him; and we are obliged to take his character from such as knew but little of him, or who, perhaps, could have given very little information if they had known more.

Parnell, by what I have been able to collect from my father and uncle, who knew him, was the most capable man in the world, to make the happiness of those he conversed with, and the least able to secure his own. He wanted that evenness of disposition, which bears disappointment with phlegm, and joy with indifference. He was ever very much elated or depressed; and his whole life spent in agony or rapture. But the turbulence of these passions only affected himself, and never those about him: he knew the ridicule of his own character, and very effectually raised the mirth of his companions, as well at his vexations, as at his triumphs.

How much his company was desired, appears from the extensiveness of his connexions, and the number of his friends. Even before he made any figure in the literary world, his friendship was sought by persons of every rank and party. The wits at that time, differed a good deal from those who are most eminent for their understanding at present. It would now be thought a very indifferent sign of a writer's good sense to disclaim his private friends for happening to be of a different party in politics; but it was then otherwise, the whig wits held the tory wits in great contempt, and these retaliated in their turn. At

the head of one party were Addison, Steele, and Congreve; at that of the other, Pope, Swift, and Arbuthnot. Parnell was a friend to both sides, and with a liberality becoming a scholar, scorned all those trifling distinctions, that are noisy for the time, and ridiculous to posterity. Nor did he emancipate himself from these without some opposition from home. Having been the son of a commonwealth's man, his tory connexions on this side of the water gave his friends in Ireland great offence; they were much enraged to see him keep company with Pope, and Swift, and Gay; they blamed his undistinguishing taste, and wondered what pleasure he could find in the conversation of men who approved the treaty of Utrecht, and disliked the Duke of Marlborough. His conversation is said to have been extremely pleasing, but in what its peculiar excellence consisted is now unknown. The letters which were written to him by his friends, are full of compliments upon his talents as a companion, and his good-nature as a man. I have several of them now before me. Pope was particularly fond of his company, and seems to regret his absence more than any of the rest.

A letter from him follows thus:

'DEAR SIR, *London, July* 29.

'I WISH it were not as ungenerous as vain to 'complain too much of a man that forgets me, but I 'could expostulate with you a whole day upon your 'inhuman silence; I call it inhuman; nor would you 'think it less, if you were truly sensible of the un-'easiness it gives me. Did I know you so ill as to 'think you proud, I would be much less concern-'ed than I am able to be, when I know one of the 'best-natured men alive neglects me; and if you

'know me so ill as to think amiss of me, with regard 'to my friendship for you, you really do not deserve 'half the trouble you occasion me. I need not tell 'you, that both Mr. Gay and myself have written 'several letters in vain; and that we were constantly 'inquiring, of all who have seen Ireland, if they saw 'you, and that, (forgotten as we are,) we are every 'day remembering you in our most agreeable hours. 'All this is true; as that we are sincerely lovers of 'you, and deplorers of your absence, and that we 'form no wish more ardently than that which brings 'you over to us, and places you in your old seat 'between us. We have lately had some distant 'hopes of the Dean's design to revisit England; 'will not you accompany him? or is England to lose 'every thing that has any charms for us, and must 'we pray for banishment as a benediction?—I have 'once been witness of some, I hope all of your sple-'netic hours: come, and be a comforter in your turn 'to me, in mine. I am in such an unsettled state, 'that I can't tell if I shall ever see you, unless it be this 'year: whether I do or not, be ever assured, you have 'as large a share of my thoughts and good wishes as 'any man, and as great a portion of gratitude in my 'heart as would enrich a monarch, could he know 'where to find it. I shall not die without testifying 'something of this nature, and leaving to the world a 'memorial of the friendship that has been so great a 'pleasure and pride to me. It would be like writing 'my own epitaph, to acquaint you with what I have 'lost since I saw you, what I have done, what I have 'thought, where I have lived, and where I now re-'pose in obscurity. My friend Jervas, the bearer 'of this, will inform you of all particulars concerning 'me; and Mr. Ford is charged with a thousand 'loves, and a thousand complaints, and a thousand

'commissions to you on my part. They will both 'tax you with the neglect of some promises which 'were too agreeable to us all to be forgot; if you care 'for any of us tell them so, and write so to me. I 'can say no more, but that I love you, and am, in 'spite of the longest neglect of happiness,

'DEAR SIR,

'Your most faithful affectionate friend,

'and Servant,

'A. POPE.

'Gay is in Devonshire, and from thence he goes 'to Bath. My father and mother never fail to com- 'memorate you.'

Among the number of his most intimate friends was Lord Oxford, whom Pope has so finely complimented upon the delicacy of his choice.

For him thou oft hast bid the world attend,
Fond to forget the statesman in the friend;
For Swift and him despis'd the farce of state,
The sober follies of the wise and great;
Dexterous the craving, fawning crowd to quit,
And pleas'd to 'scape from flattery to wit.

Pope himself was not only excessively fond of his company, but under several literary obligations to him for his assistance in the translation of Homer. Gay was obliged to him upon another account; for, being always poor, he was not above receiving from Parnell the copy-money which the latter got for his writings. Several of their letters, now before me, are proofs of this; and as they have never appeared before, it is probable the reader will be much better pleased with their idle effusions, than with any thing I can hammer out for his amusement.

'*Binfield, near Oakingham, Tuesday.*

'DEAR SIR,

'I BELIEVE the hurry you were in hindered your 'giving me a word by the last post, so that I am yet 'to learn whether you got well to town, or continue 'so there? I very much fear both for your health 'and your quiet; and no man living can be more 'truly concerned in any thing that touches either 'than myself. I would comfort myself, however, 'with hoping that your business may not be unsuc-'cessful for your sake; and that at least it may soon 'be put into other proper hands. For my own, I beg 'earnestly of you to return to us as soon as possible. 'You know how very much I want you, and that, 'however your business may depend upon any other, 'my business depends entirely upon you; and yet still 'I hope you will find your man, even though I lose 'you the meanwhile. At this time, the more I love 'you, the more I can spare you; which alone will, 'I dare say, be a reason to you to let me have you 'back the sooner. The minute I lost you, Eusta-'thius with nine hundred pages, and nine thousand 'contractions of the Greek characters, arose to view! 'Spondanus, with all his auxiliaries, in number a 'thousand pages, (value three shillings,) and Da-'cier's three volumes, Barne's two, Valterie's three, 'Cuperus, half in Greek, Leo Allatus, three parts 'in Greek, Scaliger, Macrobius, and, (worse than 'them all,) Aulus Gellius! all these rushed upon 'my soul at once, and whelmed me under a fit of the 'headach. I cursed them all religiously, damn'd 'my best friends among the rest, and even blas-'phemed Homer himself. Dear sir, not only as you 'are a friend, and a good-natured man, but as you 'are a christian and a divine, come back speedily,

'and prevent the increase of my sins; for, at the rate 'I have begun to rave, I shall not only damn all the 'poets and commentators who have gone before me, 'but be damn'd myself by all who come after me. 'To be serious; you have not only left me to the last 'degree impatient for your return, who at all times 'should have been so (though never so much as since 'I knew you in best health here,) but you have 'wrought several miracles upon our family; you 'have made old people fond of a young and gay per-'son, and inveterate papists of a clergyman of the 'Church of England; even Nurse herself, is in 'danger of being in love in her old age, and (for all 'I know) would even marry Dennis for your sake, 'because he is your man and loves his master. In 'short, come down forthwith, or give me good rea-'sons for delaying, though but for a day or two, by 'the next post. If I find them just, I will come up 'to you, though you know how precious my time is 'at present; my hours were never worth so much 'money before; but perhaps you are not sensible of 'this, who give away your own works. You are a 'generous author; I a hackney scribbler; you a Gre-'cian, and bred at a University; I a poor Englishman, 'of my own educating; you a reverend parson, I a 'wag; in short, you are Dr. Parnelle, (with an *e* at 'the end of your name) and I

'Your most obliged and
'Affectionate friend and
'Faithful servant,
'A. POPE.

'My hearty service to the Dean, Dr. Arbuthnot, 'Mr. Ford, and the true genuine shepherd, J. Gay, of 'Devon. I expect him down with you.'

We may easily perceive by this, that Parnell was not a little necessary to Pope, in conducting his translation: however, he has worded it so ambiguously, that it is impossible to bring the charge directly against him. But he is much more explicit, when he mentions his friend Gay's obligations in another letter, which he takes no pains to conceal.

'DEAR SIR,

'I WRITE to you with the same warmth, the same 'zeal of good-will and friendship, with which I used 'to converse with you two years ago, and can't think 'myself absent, when I feel you so much at my heart; 'the picture of you, which Jervas brought me over, 'is infinitely less lively a representation, than that I 'carry about with me, and which rises to my mind, 'whenever I think of you. I have many an agree-'able reverie through those woods and downs, where 'we once rambled together; my head is sometimes 'at the Bath, and sometimes at Letcomb, where the 'Dean makes a great part of my imaginary entertain-'ment, this being the cheapest way of treating me; 'I hope he will not be displeased at this manner of 'paying my respects to him, instead of following my 'friend Jervas's example, which, to say the truth, 'I have as much inclination to do, as I want ability. 'I have been ever since December last, in greater va-'riety of business, than any such men as you (that is, 'divines and philosophers) can possibly imagine a 'reasonable creature capable of. Gay's play, among 'the rest, has cost much time and long suffering, to 'stem a tide of malice and party, that certain authors 'have raised against it; the best revenge upon such 'fellows, is now in my hands, I mean your Zoilus, 'which really transcends the expectation I had con-'ceived of it. I have put it into the press, begin-

'ning with the poem Batrachom: for you seem, by 'the first paragraph of the dedication to it, to de-'sign to prefix the name of some particular person. 'I beg, therefore, to know for whom you intend it, 'that the publication may not be delayed on this ac-'count, and this as soon as is possible. Inform me 'also upon what terms I am to deal with the book-'seller, and whether you design the copy-money for 'Gay, as you formerly talked, what number of books 'you would have yourself, &c. I scarce see any 'thing to be altered in this whole piece; in the poems 'you sent, I will take the liberty you allow me: the 'story of Pandora, and the Eclogue upon Health, 'are two of the most beautiful things I ever read. 'I do not say this to the prejudice of the rest, but as 'I have read these oftener. Let me know how far 'my commission is to extend, and be confident of my 'punctual performance of whatever you enjoin. I 'must add a paragraph on this occasion in regard to 'Mr. Ward, whose verses have been a great pleasure 'to me; I will contrive they shall be so to the world, 'whenever I can find a proper opportunity of publish-'ing them.

'I shall very soon print an entire collection of my 'own madrigals, which I look upon as making my 'last will and testament, since in it I shall give all I 'ever intend to give, (which I'll beg your's and the 'Dean's acceptance of.) You must look on me no 'more a poet, but a plain commoner, who lives upon 'his own, and fears and flatters no man. I hope 'before I die, to discharge the debt I owe to Homer, 'and get, upon the whole, just fame enough to serve 'for an annuity for my own time, though I leave no-'thing to posterity.

'I beg our correspondence may be more frequent 'than it has been of late. I am sure my esteem and

'love for you, never more deserved it from you, or 'more prompted it from you. I desired our friend 'Jervas (in the greatest hurry of my business) to say 'a great deal in my name, both to yourself and the 'Dean, and must once more repeat the assurances 'to you both, of an unchanging friendship and unal-'terable esteem.

'I am, dear Sir, most entirely,
'Your affectionate, faithful,
'Obliged friend and servant,
'A. POPE.'

From these letters to Parnell, we may conclude, as far as their testimony can go, that he was an agreeable, a generous, and a sincere man. Indeed, he took care, that his friends should always see him to the best advantage; for, when he found his fits of spleen and uneasiness, which sometimes lasted for weeks together, returning, he returned with all expedition to the remote parts of Ireland, and there made out a gloomy kind of satisfaction, in giving hideous descriptions of the solitude to which he retired. It is said of a famous painter, that, being confined in prison for debt, his whole delight consisted in drawing the faces of his creditors in caricatura. It was just so with Parnell. From many of his unpublished pieces which I have seen, and from others that have appeared, it would seem, that scarcely a bog in his neighbourhood was left without reproach, and scarcely a mountain reared its head unsung. 'I can easily,' says Pope, in one of his letters, in answer to a dreary description of Parnell's, 'I can easily image to my thoughts 'the solitary hours of your eremetical life in the 'mountains, from some parallel to it in my own re-'tirement at Binfield:' and in another place, 'We 'are both miserably enough situated, God knows;

'but of the two evils, I think the solitudes of the 'South are to be preferred to the deserts of the West.' In this manner, Pope answered him in the tone of his own complaints; and these descriptions of the imagined distress of his situation served to give him a temporary relief; they threw off the blame from himself, and laid upon fortune and accident a wretchedness of his own creating.

But though this method of quarrelling in his poems with his situation, served to relieve himself, yet it was not easily endured by the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, who did not care to confess themselves his fellow-sufferers. He received many mortifications upon that account among them; for, being naturally fond of company, he could not endure to be without even theirs, which, however, among his English friends, he pretended to despise. In fact, his conduct, in this particular, was rather splenetic, than wise; he had either lost the art to engage, or did not employ his skill in securing those more permanent, though more humble connexions, and sacrificed for a month or two in England, a whole year's happiness by his country fire-side at home.

However, what he permitted the world to see of his life, was elegant and splendid; his fortune (for a poet) was very considerable, and it may easily be supposed he lived to the very extent of it. The fact is, his expenses were greater than his income, and his successor found the estate somewhat impaired at his decease. As soon as ever he had collected in his annual revenues, he immediately set out for England, to enjoy the company of his dearest friends, and laugh at the more prudent world, that were minding business, and gaining money. The friends to whom, during the latter part of his life, he was chiefly attached, were Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Jervas, and Gay.

Among these he was particularly happy, his mind was entirely at ease, and gave a loose to every harmless folly that came uppermost. Indeed, it was a society, in which, of all others, a wise man might be most foolish, without incurring any danger or contempt. Perhaps the reader will be pleased to see a letter to him, from a part of this junto, as there is something striking even in the levities of genius. It comes from Gay, Jervas, Arbuthnot, and Pope, assembled at a chop-house near the exchange, and is as follows:

'My dear Sir,

'I WAS last summer in Devonshire, and am this 'winter at Mrs. Bonyer's. In the summer I wrote 'a poem, and in the winter I have published it; 'which I have sent to you by Dr. Elwood. In the 'summer I ate two dishes of toad-stools of my own 'gathering, instead of mushrooms; and in the win-'ter I have been sick with wine, as I am at this time, 'blessed be God for it, as I must bless God for all 'things. In the summer I spoke truth to damsels; 'in the winter I told lies to ladies. Now you know 'where I have been, and what I have done. I shall 'tell you what I intend to do the ensuing summer; 'I propose to do the same thing I did last, which was 'to meet you in any part of England, you would ap-'point; don't let me have two disappointments. I 'have longed to hear from you, and to that intent, I 'teazed you with three or four letters; but, having no 'answer, I feared both yours and my letters, might 'have miscarried. I hope my performance will please 'the Dean, whom I often wished for, and to whom 'I would have often wrote, but for the same reasons 'I neglected writing to you. I hope I need not tell 'you how I love you, and how glad I shall be to hear 'from you; which, next to the seeing you, would be

'the greatest satisfaction to your most affectionate 'friend and humble servant, J. G.'

'DEAR MR. ARCHDEACON,

'Though my proportion of this epistle should be 'but a sketch in miniature, yet I take up half this 'page, having paid my club with the good compa- 'ny both for our dinner of chops and for this paper. 'The poets will give you lively descriptions in their 'way; I shall only acquaint you with that which is 'directly my province. I have just set the last hand 'to a couplet, for so I may call two nymphs in one 'piece. They are Pope's favourites: and though 'few, you will guess must have cost me more pains 'than any nymphs can be worth. He has been so 'unreasonable as to expect that I should have made 'them as beautiful upon canvass, as he has done up- 'on paper. If this same Mr. P—— should omit to 'write for the dear frogs, and the *Pervigilium*, I must 'entreat you not to let me languish for them, as I 'have done, ever since they crossed the seas; remem- 'ber by what neglects, &c. we missed them when we 'lost you, and therefore I have not yet forgiven any 'of those triflers that let them escape and run those 'hazards. I am going on the old rate, and want 'you and the Dean prodigiously, and am in hopes of 'making you a visit this summer, and of hearing 'from you both, now you are together. Fortescue, I 'am sure, will be concerned that he is not in Cornhill, 'to set his hand to these presents, not only as a wit- 'ness, but as a

'*Serviteur tres humble*,

'C. JERVAS.'

'It is so great an honour to a poor Scotchman to 'be remembered at this time a-day, especially by an

'inhabitant of the *Glacialis Ierne*, that I take it very 'thankfully, and have, with my good friends, remem- 'bered you at our table in the chop-house in Ex- 'change-Alley. There wanted nothing to complete 'our happiness but your company, and our dear 'friend the Dean's. I am sure the whole entertain- 'ment would have been to his relish. Gay has got so 'much money by his Art of Walking the Streets, 'that he is ready to set up his equipage: he is just go- 'ing to the Bank, to negociate some Exchange bills. 'Mr. Pope delays his second volume of his Homer 'till the martial spirit of the rebels is quite quelled, 'it being judged that the first part did some harm 'that way. Our love again and again to the dear 'Dean. *Fuimus torys*, I can say no more.

'ARBUTHNOT.'

'When a man is conscious that he does no good 'himself, the next thing is to cause others to do 'some. I may claim some merit this way, in has- 'tening this testimonial from your friends above- 'writing: their love to you indeed wants no spur, 'their ink wants no pen, their pen wants no hand, 'their hand wants no heart, and so forth, (after the 'manner of Rabelais; which is betwixt some mean- 'ing and no meaning;) and yet it may be said, when 'present thought and opportunity are wanting, their 'pens want ink, their hands want pens, their hearts 'want hands, &c. till time, place, and conveniency, 'concur to set them writing, as at present, a sociable 'meeting, a good dinner, warm fire, and an easy si- 'tuation do, to the joint labour and pleasure of this 'epistle.

'Wherein if I should say nothing, I should say 'much, (much being included in my love,) though 'my love be such, that if I should say much, I should

yet say nothing, it being (as Cowley says,) equally 'impossible either to conceal or to express it.

'If I were to tell you the thing I wish above all 'things, it is to see you again; the next is to see here 'your treatise of Zoilus, with the Batrachomuoma-'chia, and the Pervigilium Veneris, both which 'poems are master-pieces in several kinds; and I 'question not the prose is as excellent in its sort, as 'the Essay on Homer. Nothing can be more glo-'rious to that great Author, than that the same 'hand that raised his best statue, and decked it with 'its old laurels, should also hang up the scare-crow of 'his miserable critic, and gibbet up the carcass of 'Zoilus, to the terror of the witlings of posterity. 'More, and much more, upon this and a thousand 'other subjects, will be the matter of my next letter, 'wherein I must open all the friend to you. At this 'time I must be content with telling you, I am faith-'fully your most affectionate and humble servant,

'A. POPE.'

If we regard this letter with a critical eye, we must find it indifferent enough: if we consider it as a mere effusion of friendship, in which every writer contended in affection, it will appear much to the honour of those who wrote it. To be mindful of an absent friend in the hours of mirth and feasting, when his company is least wanted, shows no slight degree of sincerity. Yet probably there was still another motive for writing thus to him in conjunction. The above-named, together with Swift and Parnell, had some time before formed themselves into a society called the *Scribblerus Club*, and I should suppose they commemorated him thus, as being an absent member.

It is past a doubt that they wrote many things in

conjunction, and Gay usually held the pen. And yet I do not remember any productions which were the joint effort of this society, as doing it honour. There is something feeble and quaint in all their attempts, as if company repressed thought, and genius wanted solitude for its boldest and happiest exertions. Of those productions in which Parnell had a principal share, that of the origin of the Sciences from the Monkies in Ethiopia, is particularly mentioned by Pope himself, in some manuscript anecdotes which he left behind him. The Life of Homer also, prefixed to the translation of the Iliad, is written by Parnell, and corrected by Pope; and, as that great poet assures us in the same place, this correction was not effected without great labour. 'It is still stiff,' says he, 'and was 'written still stiffer: as it is, I verily think it cost 'me more pains in the correcting, than the writing 'it would have done.' All this may be easily credited; for every thing of Parnell's, that has appeared in prose, is written in a very awkward inelegant manner. It is true, his productions teem with imagination, and show great learning, but they want that ease and sweetness for which his poetry is so much admired; and the language is also shamefully incorrect. Yet, though all this must be allowed, Pope should have taken care not to leave his errors upon record against him, or put it in the power of envy to tax his friend with faults, that do not appear in what he has left to the world. A poet has a right to expect the same secresy in his friend as in his confessor; the sins he discovers are not divulged for punishment, but pardon. Indeed, Pope is almost inexcusable in this instance, as what he seems to condemn in one place, he very much applauds in another. In one of the letters from him to Parnell, abovementioned, he treats the Life of Homer with much greater respect, and

seems to say, that the prose is excellent in its kind. It must be confessed, however, that he is by no means inconsistent; what he says in both places may very easily be reconciled to truth; but who can defend his candour and his sincerity?

It would be hard, however, to suppose that there was no real friendship between these great men. The benevolence of Parnell's disposition remains unimpeached; and Pope, though subject to starts of passion and envy, yet never missed an opportunity of being truly serviceable to him. The commerce between them was carried on to the common interest of both. When Pope had a Miscellany to publish, he applied to Parnell for poetical assistance, and the latter as implicitly submitted to him for correction. Thus they mutually advanced each other's interest or fame, and grew stronger by conjunction. Nor was Pope the only person to whom Parnell had recourse for assistance. We learn from Swift's letters to Stella, that he submitted his pieces to all his friends, and readily adopted their alterations. Swift, among the number, was very useful to him in that particular; and care has been taken that the world should not remain ignorant of the obligation.

But in the connexion of wits, interest has generally very little share; they have only pleasure in view, and can seldom find it, but among each other. The *Scribblerus Club*, when the members were in town, were seldom asunder, and they often made excursions together into the country, and generally on foot. Swift was usually the butt of the company, and if a trick was played, he was always the sufferer. The whole party once agreed to walk down to the house of Lord B——, who is still living, and whose seat is about twelve miles from town. As every one agreed to make the best of his way, Swift, who was

remarkable for walking, soon left the rest behind him, fully resolved, upon his arrival, to choose the very best bed for himself, for that was his custom. In the mean time, Parnell was determined to prevent his intentions, and taking horse, arrived at Lord B——'s by another way, long before him. Having apprised his lordship of Swift's design, it was resolved at any rate to keep him out of the house; but how to effect this, was the question. Swift never had the small-pox, and was very much afraid of catching it: as soon, therefore, as he appeared striding along at some distance from the house, one of his lordship's servants was dispatched, to inform him, that the small-pox was then making great ravages in the family, but that there was a summer-house with a field bed at his service, at the end of the garden. There the disappointed Dean was obliged to retire, and take a cold supper that was sent out to him, while the rest were feasting within. However, at last they took compassion on him; and upon his promising never to choose the best bed again, they permitted him to make one of the company.

There is something satisfactory in these accounts of the follies of the wise; they give a natural air to the picture, and reconcile us to our own. There have been few poetical societies, more talked of, or productive of a greater variety of whimsical conceits, than this of the Scribblerus Club, but how long it lasted, I cannot exactly determine. The whole of Parnell's poetical existence, was not of more than eight or ten years continuance; his first excursions to England, began about the year 1706, and he died in the year 1718; so that it is probable the club began with him, and his death ended the connexion. Indeed, the festivity of his conversation, the benevolence of his heart, and the generosity of his temper, were

qualities that might serve to cement any society, and that could hardly be replaced, when he was taken away. During the two or three last years of his life, he was more fond of company than ever, and could scarcely bear to be alone. The death of his wife, it is said, was a loss to him, that he was unable to support or recover. From that time, he could never venture to court the Muse in solitude, where he was sure to find the image of her, who first inspired his attempts. He began, therefore, to throw himself into every company, and to seek from wine, if not relief, at least insensibility. Those helps that sorrow first called for assistance, habit soon rendered necessary, and he died before his fortieth year, in some measure a martyr to conjugal fidelity.

Thus in the space of a very few years, Parnell attained a share of fame, equal to what most of his contemporaries were a long life in acquiring. He is only to be considered as a poet; and the universal esteem in which his poems are held, and the reiterated pleasure they give in the perusal, are a sufficient test of their merit. He appears to me to be the last of that great school, that had modelled itself upon the ancients, and taught English poetry to resemble what the generality of mankind have allowed to excel. A studious and correct observer of antiquity, he set himself to consider nature with the lights it lent him; and he found that the more aid he borrowed from the one, the more delightfully he resembled the other. To copy nature, is a task the most bungling workman is able to execute; to select such parts as contribute to delight is reserved only for those whom accident has blest with uncommon talents, or such as have read the ancients with indefatigable industry Parnell is ever happy in the selection of his images, and scrupulously careful in the choice of his subjects. His productions

bear no resemblance to those tawdry things, which it has for some time been the fashion to admire; in writing which, the poet sits down without any plan, and heaps up splendid images, without any selection; where the reader grows dizzy with praise and admiration, and yet soon grows weary, he can scarcely tell why. Our poet, on the contrary, gives out his beauties with a more sparing hand; he is still carrying his reader forward, and just gives him refreshment sufficient to support him to his journey's end. At the end of his course, the reader regrets that his way has been so short, he wonders that it gave him so little trouble, and so resolves to go the journey over again.

His poetical language is not less correct than his subjects are pleasing. He found it at that period, in which it was brought to its highest pitch of refinement; and ever since his time, it has been gradually debasing. It is indeed amazing, after what has been done by Dryden, Addison, and Pope, to improve and harmonize our native tongue, that their successors should have taken so much pains to involve it into pristine barbarity. These misguided innovators have not been content with restoring antiquated words and phrases, but have indulged themselves in the most licentious transpositions, and the harshest constructions, vainly imagining that the more their writings are unlike prose, the more they resemble poetry. They have adopted a language of their own, and call upon mankind for admiration. All those who do not understand them, are silent, and those who make out their meaning, are willing to praise, to show they understand. From these follies and affectations, the poems of Parnell are entirely free; he has considered the language of poetry, as the language of life, and conveys the warmest thoughts in the simplest expression.

Parnell has written several poems besides these published by Pope, and some of them have been made public, with very little credit to his reputation. There are still many more that have not yet seen the light, in the possession of Sir John Parnell, his nephew, who, from that laudable zeal which he has for his uncle's reputation, will probably be slow in publishing what he may even suspect will do it injury. Of those which are usually inserted in his works, some are indifferent, and some moderately good, but the greater part are excellent. A slight stricture on the most striking shall conclude this account, which I have already drawn out to a disproportionate length.

Hesiod, or the Rise of a Woman, is a very fine illustration of an hint from Hesiod. It was one of his earliest productions, and first appeared in a miscellany published by Tonson.

Of the three songs that follow, two of them were written upon the lady he afterwards married; they were the genuine dictates of his passion, but are not excellent in their kind.

The Anacreontic, beginning with, "When Spring came on with fresh delight," is taken from a French poet whose name I forget, and, as far as I am able to judge of the French language, is better than the original. The Anacreontic that follows, "Gay Bacchus," &c. is also a translation of a Latin poem, by Aurelius Augurellus, an Italian poet, beginning with,

Invitat olim Bacchus ad cœnam suos
Comum, Jocum, Cupidinem.

Parnell, when he translated it, applied the characters to some of his friends, and as it was written for their entertainment, it probably gave them more pleasure than it has given the public in the perusal. It

seems to have more spirit than the original; but it is extraordinary that it was published as an original, and not as a translation. Pope should have acknowledged it; as he knew.

The Fairy Tale is incontestably one of the finest pieces in any language. The old dialect is not perfectly well preserved, but this is a very slight defect, where all the rest is so excellent.

The Pervigilium Veneris (which, by the bye, does not belong to Catullus) is very well versified, and in general all Parnell's translations are excellent. The battle of the Frogs and Mice, which follows, is done as well as the subject would admit; but there is a defect in the translation, which sinks it below the original, and which it was impossible to remedy: I mean the names of the combatants, which in the Greek bear a ridiculous allusion to their natures, have no force to the English reader A bacon-eater was a good name for a mouse, and Pternotractas in Greek was a very good sounding word, that conveyed that meaning. Puff-cheek would sound odiously as a name for a frog, and yet Physignathos does admirably well in the original.

The letter to Mr. Pope is one of the finest compliments that ever was paid to any poet; the description of his situation at the end of it is very fine, but far from being true. That part of it where he deplores his being far from wit and learning, as being far from Pope, gave particular offence to his friends at home. Mr. Coote, a gentleman in his neighbourhood, who thought that he himself had wit, was very much displeased with Parnell for casting his eyes so far off for a learned friend, when he could so conveniently be supplied at home.

The translation of a part of the Rape of the Lock into monkish verse, serves to show what a master Par-

nell was of the Latin; a copy of verses made in this manner, is one of the most difficult trifles that can possibly be imagined. I am assured that it was written upon the following occasion. Before the Rape of the Lock was yet completed, Pope was reading it to his friend Swift, who sat very attentively, while Parnell, who happened to be in the house, went in and out without seeming to take any notice. However, he was very diligently employed in listening, and was able, from the strength of his memory, to bring away the whole description of the Toilette pretty exactly. This he versified in the manner now published in his works; and the next day, when Pope was reading his poem to some friends, Parnell insisted that he had stolen that part of the description from an old monkish manuscript. An old paper with the Latin verses was soon brought forth, and it was not till after some time that Pope was delivered from the confusion which it at first produced.

The Book-worm is another unacknowledged translation from a Latin poem by Beza. It was the fashion with the wits of the last age, to conceal the places whence they took their hints or their subjects. A trifling acknowledgment would have made that lawful prize, which may now be considered as plunder.

The Night Piece on death deserves every praise, and I should suppose, with very little amendment, might be made to surpass all those night pieces and church-yard scenes that have since appeared. But the poem of Parnell's best known, and on which his best reputation is grounded, is the Hermit. Pope, speaking of this in those manuscript anecdotes already quoted, says, *That the poem is very good. The story*, continues he, *was written originally in* Spanish, *whence probably Howel had translated it into prose, and inserted it in one of his letters. Addison liked the*

scheme, and was not disinclined to come into it. However this may be, Dr. Henry Moore, in his Dialogues, has the very same story; and I have been informed by some, that it is originally of Arabian invention.

With respect to the prose works of Parnell, I have mentioned them already; his fame is too well grounded, for any defects in them to shake it. I will only add, that the life of Zoilus was written at the request of his friends, and designed as a satire upon Dennis and Theobald, with whom his club had long been at variance. I shall end this account with a letter to him from Pope and Gay, in which they endeavour to hasten him to finish that production.

'DEAR SIR, *London, March* 18.

'I MUST own I have long owed you a letter, but 'you must own, you have owed me one a good deal 'longer. Besides, I have but two people in the 'whole kingdom of Ireland to take care of; the Dean 'and you: but you have several who complain of 'your neglect in England. Mr. Gay complains, Mr. 'Harcourt complains, Mr. Jervas complains, Dr. Ar'buthnot complains, my Lord complains; I com'plain. (Take notice of this figure of iteration, 'when you make your next sermon.) Some say, 'you are in deep discontent at the new turn of af'fairs; others that you are so much in the archbi'shop's good graces, that you will not correspond 'with any that have seen the last ministry. Some af'firm, you have quarrelled with Pope (whose friends, 'they observe, daily fall from him, on account of his 'satirical and comical disposition;) others, that you 'are insinuating yourself into the opinion of the inge'nious Mr. *What-do-ye-call-him.* Some think you are 'preparing your sermons for the press, and others, 'that you will transform them into essays and moral

'discourses. But the only excuse that I will allow, 'is your attention to the life of Zoilus. The frogs 'already seem to croak for their transportation to 'England, and are sensible how much that Doctor is 'cursed and hated, who introduced their species into 'your nation; therefore, as you dread the wrath of 'St. Patrick, send them hither, and rid the kingdom 'of those pernicious and loquacious animals.

'I have at length received your poem out of Mr. 'Addison's hands, which shall be sent as soon as you 'order it, and in what manner you shall appoint. I 'shall in the mean time give Mr. Tooke a packet for 'you, consisting of divers merry pieces. Mr. Gay's 'new farce, Mr. Burnet's letter to Mr. Pope, Mr. 'Pope's Temple of Fame, Mr. Thomas Burnet's 'Grumbler on Mr. Gay, and the bishop of Ailsbury's 'Elegy, written either by Mr. Cary, or some other 'hand.

'Mr. Pope is reading a letter, and in the mean time 'I make use of the pen to testify my uneasiness in 'not hearing from you. I find success, even in the 'most trivial things, raises the indignation of scrib-'blers: for I, for my What-d'-ye-call-it, could neither 'escape the fury of Mr. Burnet, or the German doc-'tor; then where will rage end, when Homer is to 'be translated? Let Zoilus hasten to your friend's 'assistance, and envious criticism shall be no more. 'I am in hopes that we may order our affairs so as to 'meet this summer at the Bath; for Mr. Pope and 'myself have thoughts of taking a trip thither. You 'shall preach and we will write lampoons; for it is es-'teemed as great an honour to leave the Bath, for fear 'of a broken head, as for a Terræ Filius of Oxford to 'be expelled. I have no place at court; therefore, 'that I may not entirely be without one every

'where, show that I have a place in your remem-
'brance.

'Your most affectionate,
'Faithful servants,
'A. POPE, and J. GAY.

'Homer will be published in three weeks.'

I cannot finish this trifle, without returning my sincerest acknowledgments to Sir John Parnell, for the generous assistance he was pleased to give me, in furnishing me with many materials, when he heard I was about writing the life of his uncle; as also to Mr. and Mrs. Hayes, relations of our poet; and to my very good friend Mr. Stevens, who, being an ornament to letters himself, is very ready to assist all the attempts of others.

THE

LIFE

OF

HENRY

LORD VISCOUNT

BOLINGBROKE,

FIRST PRINTED IN THE

YEAR 1771.

THE

LIFE

OF

LORD BOLINGBROKE.

THERE are some characters that seem formed by nature to take delight in struggling with opposition, and whose most agreeable hours are passed in storms of their own creating. The subject of the present sketch was perhaps of all others the most indefatigable in raising himself enemies, to show his power in subduing them; and was not less employed in improving his superior talents, than in finding objects on which to exercise their activity. His life was spent in a continual conflict of politics, and as if that was too short for the combat, he has left his memory as a subject of lasting contention.

It is indeed no easy matter to preserve an acknowledged impartiality, in talking of a man so differently regarded on account of his political, as well as his religious principles. Those, whom his politics may please, will be sure to condemn him for his religion; and on the contrary, those most strongly attached to his theological opinions, are the most likely to decry his politics. On whatever side he is regarded, he is

sure to have opposers; and this was perhaps what he most desired, having from nature a mind better pleased with the struggle than the victory.

Henry St. John, Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, was born in the year 1672, at Battersea in Surry, at a seat that had been in the possession of his ancestors for ages before. His family was of the first rank, equally conspicuous for its antiquity, dignity, and large possessions. It is found to trace its original as high as Adam de Port, Baron of Basing in Hampshire, before the conquest; and in a succession of ages to have produced warriors, patriots, and statesmen, some of whom were conspicuous for their loyalty, and others for their defending the rights of the people. His grandfather Sir Walter St. John, of Battersea, marrying one of the daughters of Lord Chief Justice St. John, who, as all know, was strongly attached to the Republican party, Henry, the subject of the present memoir, was brought up in his family, and consequently imbibed the first principles of his education amongst the dissenters. At that time Daniel Burgess, a fanatic of a very peculiar kind, being at once possessed of zeal and humour, and as well known for the archness of his conceits as the furious obstinacy of his principles, was confessor in the Presbyterian way to his grandmother, and was appointed to direct our author's first studies. Nothing is so apt to disgust a feeling mind as mistaken zeal; and perhaps the absurdity of the first lectures he received might have given him that contempt for all religions, which he might have justly conceived against one. Indeed, no task can be more mortifying than what he was condemned to undergo: "I was obliged," says he, in one place, "while yet a boy, to read over the Commenta-"ries of Dr. Manton, whose pride it was to have made "an hundred and nineteen sermons, on the hundred

"and nineteenth psalm." Dr. Manton and his sermons were not likely to prevail much on one, who was, perhaps, the most sharp-sighted in the world at discovering the absurdities of others, however he might have been guilty of establishing many of his own.

But these dreary institutions were of no very long continuance; as soon as it was fit to take him out of the hands of the women, he was sent to Eton school, and removed thence to Christ-church college in Oxford. His genius and understanding were seen and admired in both these seminaries, but his love of pleasure had so much the ascendency, that he seemed contented rather with the consciousness of his own great powers, than their exertion. However, his friends, and those who knew him most intimately, were thoroughly sensible of the extent of his mind; and when he left the university, he was considered as one who had the fairest opportunity of making a shining figure in active life.

Nature seemed not less kind to him in her external embellishments, than in adorning his mind. With the graces of an handsome person, and a face, in which dignity was happily blended with sweetness, he had a manner of address that was very engaging. His vivacity was always awake, his apprehension was quick, his wit refined, and his memory amazing: his subtlety in thinking and reasoning, was profound, and all these talents were adorned with an elocution that was irresistible.

To the assemblage of so many gifts from nature, it was expected that art would soon give her finishing hand; and that a youth, begun in excellence, would soon arrive at perfection: but such is the perverseness of human nature, that an age which should have been employed in the acquisition of knowledge, was

dissipated in pleasure, and instead of aiming to excel in praise-worthy pursuits, Bolingbroke seemed more ambitious of being thought the greatest rake about town. This period might have been compared to that of fermentation in liquors, which grow muddy before they brighten; but it must also be confessed, that those liquors which never ferment, are seldom clear *. In this state of disorder, he was not without his lucid intervals; and even while he was noted for keeping Miss Gumley, the most expensive prostitute in the kingdom, and bearing the greatest quantity of wine without intoxication, he even then despised his paltry ambition. "The love of study, says he, "and desire of knowledge, were what I felt all my "life; and though my genius, unlike the dæmon "of Socrates, whispered so softly, that very often I "heard him not in the hurry of these passions with "which I was transported, yet some calmer hours "there were, and in them I hearkened to him." These sacred admonitions were indeed very few, since his excesses are remembered to this very day. I have spoken to an old man, who assured me that he saw him and one of his companions run naked through the Park, in a fit of intoxication; but then it was a time when public decency might be transgressed with less danger than at present.

During this period, as all his attachments were to pleasure, so his studies only seemed to lean that way. His first attempts were in poetry, in which he discovers more wit than taste, more labour than har-

* Our author appears fond of this figure, for we find it introduced into his Essay on Polite Literature. The propriety, however, both of the simile, and of the position it endeavours to illustrate, is ably examined in a periodical work, entitled the Philanthrope, published in London, in the year 1797.

mony, in his versification. We have a copy of his verses prefixed to Dryden's Virgil, complimenting the poet, and praising his translation. We have another not so well known, prefixed to a French work, published in Holland, by the Chevalier de St. Hyacinth, intituled, le Chef d'Oeuvre d'un Inconnu. This performance is an humorous piece of criticism upon a miserable old ballad; and Bolingbroke's compliment, though written in English, is printed in Greek characters, so that at the first glance, it may deceive the eye, and be mistaken for real Greek. There are two or three things more of his composition, which have appeared since his death, but which do honour neither to his parts nor memory.

In this mad career of pleasure he continued for some time; but at length in 1700, when he arrived at the twenty-eighth year of his age, he began to dislike his method of living, and to find that sensual pleasure alone, was not sufficient to make the happiness of a reasonable creature. He therefore made his first effort to break from his state of infatuation, by marrying the daughter, and coheiress of Sir Henry Winchescomb, a descendant from the famous Jack of Newbury, who, though but a clothier in the reign of Henry VIII. was able to entertain the king and all his retinue, in the most splendid manner. This lady was possessed of a fortune exceeding forty thousand pounds, and was not deficient in mental accomplishments; but whether he was not yet fully satiated with his former pleasures, or whether her temper was not conformable to his own, it is certain they were far from living happily together. After cohabiting for some time together, they parted by mutual consent, both equally displeased; he complaining of the obstinacy of her temper, she of the shamelessness of his infidelity. A great part of her fortune some time

after upon his attainder was given her back; but, as her family estates were settled upon him, he enjoyed them after her death, upon the reversal of his attainder.

Having taken a resolution to quit the allurements of pleasure for the stronger attractions of ambition, soon after his marriage, he procured a seat in the house of commons, being elected for the borough of Wotton-Basset in Wiltshire, his father having served several times for the same place. Besides his natural endowments and his large fortune, he had other very considerable advantages, that gave him weight in the senate, and seconded his views of preferment. His grandfather Sir Walter St. John, was still alive; and that gentleman's interest was so great in his own county of Wilts, that he represented it in two parliaments in a former reign. His father also was then the representative for the same; and the interest of his wife's family in the house was very extensive. Thus Bolingbroke took his seat with many accidental helps, but his chief and great resource lay in his own extensive abilities.

At that time the whig and the tory parties were strongly opposed in the house, and pretty nearly balanced. In the latter years of King William, the tories, who from every motive were opposed to the court, had been gaining popularity, and now began to make a public stand against their competitors. Robert Harley, afterwards earl of Oxford, a staunch and confirmed tory, was, in the year 1700, chosen speaker of the house of commons, and was continued in the same, upon the accession of Queen Anne, the year ensuing. Bolingbroke had all along been bred up, as was before observed, among the dissenters, his friends leaned to that persuasion, and all his connexions were in the whig interest. However, either from principle, or

from perceiving the tory party to be then gaining ground, while the whigs were declining, he soon changed his connexions, and joined himself to Harley, for whom then he had the greatest esteem: nor did he bring him his vote alone, but his opinion; which, even before the end of his first session, he rendered very considerable, the house, perceiving even in so young a speaker, the greatest eloquence, united with the profoundest discernment. The year following, he was again chosen anew for the same borough, and persevered in his former attachments, by which he gained such an authority and influence in the house, that it was thought proper to reward his merit; and on the 10th of April, 1704, he was appointed secretary at war, and of the marines, his friend Harley having, a little before, been made secretary of state.

The tory party being thus established in power, it may be easily supposed that every method would be used to depress the whig interest, and to prevent it from rising; yet so much justice was done even to merit in an enemy, that the Duke of Marlborough, who might be considered as at the head of the opposite party, was supplied with all the necessaries for carrying on the war in Flanders with vigour; and it is remarkable, that the greatest events of his campaigns, such as the battles of Blenheim and Ramillies, and several glorious attempts made by the Duke to shorten the war by some decisive action, fell out while Bolingbroke was Secretary at War. In fact, he was a sincere admirer of that great General, and avowed it upon all occasions to the last moment of his life: he knew his faults, he admired his virtues, and had the boast of being instrumental in giving lustre to those triumphs, by which his own power was in a manner overthrown.

As the affairs of the nation were then in as fluctua-

ting a state as at present, Harley, after maintaining the lead for above three years, was in his turn obliged to submit to the whigs, who once more became the prevailing party, and he was compelled to resign the seals. The friendship between him and Bolingbroke seemed at this time to have been sincere and disinterested; for the latter chose to follow his fortune, and the next day resigned his employments in the administration, following his friend's example, and setting an example at once of integrity and moderation. As an instance of this, when his coadjutors the tories were for carrying a violent measure in the House of Commons, in order to bring the Princess Sophia into England, Bolingbroke so artfully opposed it, that it dropt without a debate. For this his moderation was praised, but perhaps at the expense of his sagacity.

For some time the whigs seemed to have gained a complete triumph, and upon the election of a new Parliament, in the year 1708, Bolingbroke was not returned. The interval which followed of above two years, he employed in the severest study; and this recluse period he ever after used to consider as the most active and serviceable of his whole life. But his retirement was soon interrupted by the prevailing of his party once more; for the Whig Parliament being dissolved in the year 1710, he was again chosen, and Harley being made Chancellor, and under-treasurer of the Exchequer, the important post of Secretary of State was given to our author, in which he discovered a degree of genius and assiduity, that perhaps have never been known to be united in one person to the same degree.

The English annals scarcely produced a more trying juncture, or that required such various abilities to regulate. He was then placed in a sphere, where he was obliged to conduct the machine of state, strug-

gling with a thousand various calamities: a desperate enraged party, whose characteristic it has ever been to bear none in power but themselves; a war conducted by an able general, his professed opponent, and whose victories only tended to render him every day more formidable; a foreign enemy, possessed of endless resources, and seeming to gather strength from every defeat; an insidious alliance, that wanted only to gain the advantage of victory, without contributing to the expenses of the combat; a weak declining mistress that was led by every report, and seemed ready to listen to whatever was said against him; still more, a gloomy, indolent, and suspicious colleague, that envied his power, and hated him for his abilities: these were a part of the difficulties that Bolingbroke had to struggle with in office, and under which he was to conduct the treaty of peace of Utrecht, which was considered as one of the most complicated negociations that history can afford. But nothing seemed too great for his abilities and industry; he set himself to the undertaking with spirit: he began to pave the way to the intended treaty, by making the people discontented at the continuance of the war; for this purpose he employed himself in drawing up accurate computations of the numbers of our own men, and that of foreigners employed in its destructive progress. He even wrote in the Examiners, and other periodical papers of the times, showing how much of the burden rested upon England, and how little was sustained by those who falsely boasted their alliance. By these means, and after much debate in the House of Commons, the Queen received a petition from Parliament, showing the hardships the allies had put upon England in carrying on this war, and consequently how necessary it was to apply relief to so ill-judged a connexion. It may be easily supposed

that the Dutch, against whom this petition was chiefly levelled, did all that was in their power to oppose it; many of the foreign courts also, with whom we had any transactions, were continually at work to defeat the minister's intentions. Memorial was delivered after memorial; the people of England, the Parliament, and all Europe, were made acquainted with the injustice and the dangers of such a proceeding: however, Bolingbroke went on with steadiness and resolution; and although the attacks of his enemies at home might have been deemed sufficient to employ his attention, yet he was obliged at the same time that he furnished materials to the press in London, to furnish instructions to all our ministers and ambassadors abroad, who would do nothing but in pursuance of his directions. As an orator in the senate he exerted all his eloquence, he stated all the great points that were brought before the house, he answered the objections that were made by the leaders of the opposition; and all this with such success, that even his enemies, while they opposed his power, acknowledged his abilities. Indeed, such were the difficulties he had to encounter, that we find him acknowledging himself some years after, that he never looked back on this great event, passed as it was, without a secret emotion of mind, when he compared the vastness of the undertaking and the importance of the success, with the means employed to bring it about, and with those which were employed to frustrate his intentions.

While he was thus industriously employed, he was not without the rewards that deserved to follow such abilities, joined to so much assiduity. In July, 1712, he was created Baron St. John of Lidyard Tregose in Wiltshire, and Viscount Bolingbroke; by the last of which titles he is now generally known, and is likely to be talked of by posterity: he was also the same

year appointed Lord Lieutenant of the County of Essex. By the titles of Tregose and Bolingbroke, he united the honours of the elder and younger branch of his family; and thus transmitted into one channel the opposing interest of two races, that had been distinguished, one for their loyalty to King Charles I. the other for their attachment to the Parliament that opposed him. It was afterwards his boast, that he steered clear of the extremes for which his ancestors had been distinguished, having kept the spirit of the one, and acknowledged the subordination that distinguished the other.

Bolingbroke, being thus raised very near the summit of power, began to perceive more nearly the defects of him who was placed there. He now began to find that Lord Oxford whose party he had followed, and whose person he had esteemed, was by no means so able or so industrious as he supposed him to be. He now began from his heart to renounce the friendship which he once had for his coadjutor; he began to imagine him treacherous, mean, indolent, and invidious; he even began to ascribe his own promotion to Oxford's hatred, and to suppose that he was sent up to the House of Lords, only to render him contemptible. These suspicions were partly true, and partly suggested by Bolingbroke's own ambition; being sensible of his own superior importance and capacity, he could not bear to see another take the lead in public affairs, when he knew they owed their chief success to his own management. Whatever might have been his motives, whether of contempt, hatred, or ambition, it is certain an irreconcileable breach began between these two leaders of their party; their mutual hatred was so great, that even their own common interest, the vigour of their negociations, and the safety of their friends, were entirely sacrificed to it. It was in vain

that Swift, who was admitted into their counsels, urged the unreasonable impropriety of their disputes; that while they were thus at variance within the walls, the enemy were making irreparable breaches without. Bolingbroke's antipathy was so great, that even success would have been hateful to him, if Lord Oxford were to be a partner. He abhorred him to that degree, that he could not bear to be joined with him in any case; and even some time after, when the lives of both were aimed at, he could not think of concerting measures with him for their mutual safety, preferring even death itself to the appearance of a temporary friendship.

Nothing could have been more weak and injudicious than their mutual animosities at this juncture; and it may be asserted with truth, that men, who were unable to suppress or conceal their resentments upon such a trying occasion, were unfit to take the lead in any measures, be their industry or their abilities ever so great. In fact, their dissentions were soon found to involve not only them, but their party in utter ruin; their hopes had for some time been declining, the whigs were daily gaining ground, and the Queen's death soon after totally destroyed all their schemes with their power.

Upon the accession of George I. to the throne, dangers began to threaten the late ministry on every side; whether they had really intentions of bringing in the Pretender, or whether the whigs made it a pretext for destroying them, is uncertain; but the king very soon began to show, that they were to expect neither favour nor mercy at his hands. Upon his landing at Greenwich, when the court came to wait upon him, and Lord Oxford among the number, he studiously avoided taking any notice of him, and testified his resentment, by the caresses he be-

stowed upon the members of the opposite faction. A regency had been some time before appointed to govern the kingdom, and Addison was made secretary. Bolingbroke still maintained his place of state secretary, but subject to the contempt of the great, and the insults of the mean. The first step taken by them to mortify him, was to order all letters and packets directed to the Secretary of State, to be sent to Mr. Addison; so that Bolingbroke was in fact removed from his office, that is, the execution of it, in two days after the Queen's death. But this was not the worst, for his mortifications were continually heightened by the daily humiliation of waiting at the door of the apartment where the regency sat with a bag in his hand, and being all the time, as it were, exposed to the insolence of those, who were tempted by their natural malevolence, or who expected to make their court to those in power, by abusing him.

Upon this sudden turn of fortune, when the seals were taken from him, he went into the country, and having received a message from court, to be present when the seal was taken from the door of the secretary's office, he excused himself, alleging, that so trifling a ceremony might as well be performed by one of the under secretaries, but, at the same time, requested the honour of kissing the king's hand, to whom he testified the utmost submission. This request, however, was rejected with disdain; the king had been taught to regard him as an enemy, and threw himself entirely on the whigs for safety and protection.

The new parliament, mostly composed of whigs, met the 17th of March, and in the king's speech from the throne, many inflaming hints were given, and many methods of violence chalked out to the two houses. 'The first steps, (says Lord Bolingbroke, 'speaking on this occasion) in both, were perfectly

'answerable; and, to the shame of the peerage be 'it spoken, I saw at that time several lords concur 'to condemn in one general vote, all that they had 'approved in a former Parliament, by many parti- 'cular resolutions. Among several bloody resolu- 'tions proposed and agitated at this time, the resolu- 'tion of impeaching me of high treason was taken, 'and I took that of leaving England, not in a panic 'terror, improved by the artifices of the Duke of 'Marlborough, whom I knew even at that time too 'well, to act by his advice or information in any 'case, but on such grounds as the proceedings 'which soon followed, sufficiently justified, and such 'as I have never repented building upon. Those, 'who blamed it in the first heat, were soon after 'obliged to change their language; for what other 'resolution could I take? The method of prosecu- 'tion designed against me, would have put me out 'of a condition immediately to act for myself, or 'to serve those who were less exposed than me, but 'who were, however, in danger. On the other hand, 'how few were there, on whose assistance I could de- 'pend, or to whom I would even in these circum- 'stances be obliged! The ferment in the nation was 'brought up to a considerable height; but there was 'at that time no reason to expect that it could in- 'fluence the proceedings in Parliament, in favour of 'those who should be accused: left to its own move- 'ment, it was much more proper to quicken, than 'slacken the prosecutions; and who was there to 'guide its motions? The tories, who had been true 'to one another to the last, were a handful, and no 'great vigour could be expected from them: the 'whimsicals, disappointed of the figure which they 'hoped to make, began indeed to join their old 'friends. One of the principal among them, namely,

'the Earl of Anglesea, was so very good as to confess to me, that if the court had called the servants 'of the late Queen to account, and stopped there, 'he must have considered himself as a judge, and 'acted according to his conscience on what should 'have appeared to him; but that war had been declared to the whole tory party, and that now the 'state of things was altered. This discourse needed 'no commentary, and proved to me, that I had 'never erred in the judgment I made of this set of 'men. Could I then resolve to be obliged to them, 'or to suffer with Oxford? As much as I still was 'heated by the disputes, in which I had been all 'my life engaged against the whigs, I would sooner 'have chosen to owe my security to their indulgence, 'than to the assistance of the whimsicals: but I 'thought banishment, with all her train of evils, preferable to either.'

Such was the miserable situation, to which he was reduced upon this occasion; of all the number of his former flatterers and dependants, scarcely was one found remaining. Every hour brought fresh reports of his alarming situation, and the dangers which threatened him and his party on all sides. Prior, who had been employed in negociating the treaty of Utrecht, was come over to Dover, and had promised to reveal all he knew. The Duke of Marlborough planted his creatures round his lordship, who artfully endeavoured to increase the danger; and an impeachment was actually preparing, in which he was accused of high treason. It argued therefore no great degree of timidity in his lordship, to take the first opportunity to withdraw from danger, and to suffer the first boilings of popular animosity to quench the flame that had been raised against him; accordingly, having made a gallant show of despising the ma-

chinations against him, having appeared in a very unconcerned manner at the play-house in Drury-lane, and having bespoke another play for the night ensuing; having subscribed to a new opera that was to be acted some time after, and talked of making an elaborate defence, he went off that same night in disguise to Dover, as a servant to Le Vigne, a messenger belonging to the French king; and there one William Morgan, who had been a Captain in General Hill's regiment of Dragoons, hired a vessel, and carried him over to Calais, where the governor attended him in his coach, and carried him to his house, with all possible distinction.

The news of Lord Bolingbroke's flight, was soon known over the whole town; and the next day a letter from him to Lord Lansdowne, was handed about in print, to the following effect.

"My Lord,

"I left the town so abruptly, that I had no time "to take leave of you or any of my friends. You "will excuse me, when you know that I had certain "and repeated informations, from some who are "in the secret of affairs, that a resolution was taken, "by those who have power to execute it, to pursue "me to the scaffold. My blood was to have been the "cement of a new alliance, nor could my innocence "be any security, after it had once been demanded "from abroad, and resolved on at home, that it was "necessary to cut me off. Had there been the least "reason to hope for a fair and open trial, after having "been already prejudged unheard by the two houses "of Parliament, I should not have declined the strictest examination. I challenge the most inveterate "of my enemies to produce any one instance of a "criminal correspondence, or the least corruption of

" any part of the administration in which I was con-
" cerned. If my zeal for the honour and dignity of
" my Royal Mistress, and the true interest of my
" country, have any where transported me to let slip
" a warm or unguarded expression, I hope the most
" favourable interpretation will be put upon it. It is
" a comfort that will remain with me in all my mis-
" fortunes, that I served her Majesty faithfully, and
" dutifully, in that especially which she had most at
" heart, relieving her people from a bloody and ex-
" pensive war, and that I have also been too much an
" Englishman, to sacrifice the interest of my country
" to any foreign ally; and it is for this crime only,
" that I am now driven from thence. You shall hear
" more at large from me shortly.

YOURS, &c."

No sooner was it universally known that he was retired to France, than his flight was construed into a proof of his guilt; and his enemies accordingly set about driving on his impeachment with redoubled alacrity. Mr. afterwards Sir Robert Walpole, who had suffered a good deal by his attachment to the whig interest during the former reign, now undertook to bring in and conduct the charge against him in the House of Commons. His impeachment consisted of six articles, which Walpole read to the house, in substance as follows. First, That, whereas, the Lord Bolingbroke had assured the Dutch Ministers, that the Queen his mistress, would make no peace but in concert with them, yet he had sent Mr. Prior to France that same year with proposals for a treaty of peace with that Monarch, without the consent of the allies. Secondly, That he advised and promoted the making a separate treaty of convention with France, which was signed in September. Thirdly, That he disclosed to M. Mesnager, the French Minis-

ter at London, this convention, which was the Preliminary instructions to her Majesty's Plenipotentiaries at Utrecht. Fourthly, That her Majesty's final instructions to her Plenipotentiaries were disclosed by him to the Abbot Gualtier, who was an Emissary of France. Fifthly, that he disclosed to the French the manner how Tournay in Flanders might be gained by them. And, lastly, That he advised and promoted the yielding up Spain, and the West-Indies to the Duke of Anjou, then an enemy to her Majesty. These were urged by Walpole with great vehemence, and aggravated with all the eloquence of which he was master. He challenged any person in behalf of the accused, and asserted, that to vindicate were in a manner to share his guilt. In this universal consternation of the tory party, none was for some time seen to stir; but at length General Ross, who had received favours from his Lordship, boldly stood up, and said, he wondered that no man more capable was found to appear in defence of the accused. However, in attempting to proceed, he hesitated so much, that he was obliged to sit down, observing that he would reserve what he had to say to another opportunity. It may easily be supposed, that the whigs found no great difficulty in passing the vote for his impeachment through the House of Commons. It was brought into that house on the 10th of June, 1715, it was sent up to the House of Lords on the 6th of August ensuing, and in consequence of which he was attainted by them of high treason on the 10th of September. Nothing could be more unjust than such a sentence; but justice had been drowned in the spirit of party.

Bolingbroke, thus finding all hopes cut off at home, began to think of improving his wretched fortune upon the Continent. He had left England with a

very small fortune, and his attainder totally cut off all resources for the future. In this depressed situation, he began to listen to some proposals which were made by the Pretender, who was then residing at Barr, in France, and who was desirous of admitting Bolingbroke into his secret councils. A proposal of this nature had been made him shortly after his arrival at Paris, and before his attainder at home; but while he had yet any hopes of succeeding in England, he absolutely refused, and made the best applications his ruined fortune would permit to prevent the extremity of his prosecution.

He had for some time waited for an opportunity of determining himself, even after he found it vain to think of making his peace at home. He let his Jacobite friends in England know, that they had but to command him, and he was ready to venture in their service the little all that remained, as frankly as he had exposed all that was gone. At length, (says he, talking of himself,) these commands came, and were executed in the following manner. The person who was sent to me, arrived in the beginning of July, 1715, at the place I had retired to in Dauphine. He spoke in the name of all his friends whose authority could influence me; and he brought word, that Scotland was not only ready to take arms, but under some sort of dissatisfaction to be withheld from beginning; that in England the people were exasperated against the government to such a degree, that far from wanting to be encouraged, they could not be restrained from insulting it on every occasion; that the whole tory party was become avowedly Jacobites; that many officers of the army, and the majority of the soldiers, were well affected to the cause; that the city of London was ready to rise, and that the enterprises for seizing of several places were ripe for execution; in a word, that

most of the principal tories were in concert with the Duke of Ormond: for I had pressed particularly to be informed whether his Grace acted alone, or, if not, who were his council; and that the others were so disposed, that there remained no doubt of their joining as soon as the first blow should be struck. He added, that my friends were a little surprised, to observe that I lay neuter in such a conjuncture. He represented to me the danger I ran, of being prevented by people of all sides from having the merit of engaging early in this enterprise, and how unaccountable it would be for a man, impeached and attainted under the present government, to take no share in bringing about a revolution so near at hand and so certain. He intreated that I would defer no longer to join the Chevalier, to advise and assist in carrying on his affairs, and to solicit and negociate at the court of France, where my friends imagined that I should not fail to meet a favourable reception, and whence they made no doubt of receiving assistance in a situation of affairs so critical, so unexpected, and so promising. He concluded, by giving me a letter from the Pretender, whom he had seen in his way to me, in which I was pressed to repair without loss of time to Comercy; and this instance was grounded on the message which the bearer of the letter had brought me from England. In the progress of the conversation with the messenger, he related a number of facts, which satisfied me as to the general disposition of the people; but he gave me little satisfaction as to the measures taken to improve this disposition, for driving the business on with vigour, if it tended to a revolution, or for supporting it to advantage, if it spun into a war. When I questioned him concerning several persons whose disinclination to the government admitted no doubt, and whose names, quality, and experience, were very essential to

the success of the undertaking; he owned to me that they kept a great reserve, and did at most but encourage others to act by general and dark expressions. I received this account and this summons ill in my bed; yet important as the matter was, a few minutes served to determine me. The circumstances wanting to form a reasonable inducement to engage did not excuse me; but the smart of a bill of attainder tingled in every vein, and I looked on my party to be under oppression, and to call for my assistance. Besides which, I considered first that I should be certainly informed, when I conferred with the Chevalier, of many particulars unknown to this gentleman; for I did not imagine that the English could be so near to take up arms as he represented them to be, on no other foundation than that which he exposed.

In this manner having for some time debated with himself, and taken his resolution, he lost no time in repairing to the Pretender at Comercy, and took the seals of that nominal King, as he had formerly those of his potent mistress. But this was a terrible falling off indeed; and the very first conversation he had with this weak projector gave him the most unfavourable expectations of future success. He talked to me (says his Lordship) like a man who expected every moment to set out for England or Scotland, but who did not very well know for which: and when he entered into the particulars of his affairs, I found that concerning the former he had nothing more circumstantial or positive to go upon, than what I have ready related. But the Duke of Ormond had been for some time, I cannot say how long, engaged with the Chevalier: he had taken the direction of this whole affair, as far as it related to England, upon himself, and had received a commission for this purpose, which contained the most ample powers that could be

given. But still, however, all was unsettled, undetermined, and ill-understood. The Duke had asked from France a small body of forces, a sum of money, and a quantity of ammunition; but to the first part of the request he received a flat denial, but was made to hope that some arms and some ammunition might be given. This was but a very gloomy prospect; yet hope swelled the depressed party so high, that they talked of nothing less than an instant and ready revolution. It was their interest to be secret and industrious; but rendered sanguine by their passions, they made no doubt of subverting a government with which they were angry, and gave as great an alarm, as would have been imprudent at the eve of a general insurrection.

Such was the state of things when Bolingbroke arrived to take up his new office at Comercy; and although he saw the deplorable state of the party with which he was embarked, yet he resolved to give his affairs the best complexion he was able, and set out for Paris, in order to procure from that court the necessary succours for his new master's invasion of England. But his reception and negociations at Paris were still more unpromising than those at Comercy; and nothing but absolute infatuation seemed to dictate every measure taken by the party. He there found a multitude of people at work, and every one doing what seemed good in his own eyes; no subordination, no order, no concert. The Jacobites had wrought one another up to look upon the success of the present designs as infallible: every meeting-house which the populace demolished, as he himself says, every little drunken riot which happened, served to confirm them in these sanguine expectations; and there was hardly one among them, who would lose the air of contributing by his intrigues to the res-

toration, which he took for granted would be brought about in a few weeks. Care and hope, says our author very humourously, sate on every busy Irish face; those who could read and write had letters to show; and those who had not arrived to this pitch of erudition had their secrets to whisper. No sex was excluded from this ministry; Fanny Oglethorp kept her corner in it; and Olive Trant, a woman of the same mixed reputation, was the great wheel of this political machine. The ridiculous correspondence was carried on with England by people of like importance, and who were busy in sounding the alarm in the ears of an enemy, whom it was their interest to surprise. By these means, as he himself continues to inform us, the government of England was put on its guard, so that before he came to Paris, what was doing had been discovered. The little armament made at Havre de Grace, which furnished the only means to the Pretender of landing on the coasts of Britain, and which had exhausted the treasury of St. Germains, was talked of publicly. The Earl of Stair, the English minister at that city, very soon discovered its destination, and all the particulars of the intended invasion; the names of the persons from whom supplies came, and who were particularly active in the design, were whispered about at tea-tables and coffee-houses. In short, what by the indiscretion of the projectors, what by the private interests and ambitious views of the French, the most private transactions came to light; and such of the more prudent plotters, who supposed that they had trusted their heads to the keeping of one or two friends, were in reality at the mercy of numbers. Into such company, exclaims our noble writer, was I fallen for my sins. Still, however, he went on, steering in the wide ocean without a compass, till the death of Lewis

XIV. and the arrival of the Duke of Ormond at Paris, rendered all his endeavours abortive: yet, notwithstanding these unfavourable circumstances, he still continued to dispatch several messages and directions for England, to which he received very evasive and ambiguous answers. Among the number of these, he drew up a paper at Chaville, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, Marshal Berwick, and De Torcy, which was sent to England just before the death of the King of France, representing that France could not answer the demands of their memorial, and praying directions what to do. A reply to this came to him through the French Secretary of State, wherein they declared themselves unable to say any thing, till they saw what turn affairs would take on the death of the King, which had reached their ears. Upon another occasion a message coming from Scotland to press the Chevalier to hasten their rising, he dispatched a messenger to London to the Earl of Mar, to tell him that the concurrence of England in the insurrection, was ardently wished and expected: but, instead of that Nobleman's waiting for instructions, he had already gone into the Highlands, and there actually put himself at the head of his clans. After this, in concert with the Duke of Ormond, he dispatched one Mr. Hamilton, who got all the papers by heart, for fear of a miscarriage, to their friends in England, to inform them, that though the Chevalier was destitute of succour, and all reasonable hopes of it, yet he would land as they pleased in England or Scotland at a minute's warning; and, therefore, they might rise immediately after they had sent dispatches to him. To this message Mr. Hamilton returned very soon with an answer given by Lord Lansdowne, in the name of all the persons privy to the secret, that, since affairs grew daily worse, and would not mend by delay, the malcontents in England had

resolved to declare immediately, and would be ready to join the Duke of Ormond on his landing; adding, that his person would be as safe in England as in Scotland, and that in every other respect it was better he should land in England; that they had used their utmost endeavours, and hoped the Western counties would be in a good posture to receive him; and that he should land as near as possible to Plymouth. With these assurances the Duke embarked, though he had heard before of the seizure of many of his most zealous adherents, of the dispersion of many more, and the consternation of all; so that upon his arrival at Plymouth, finding nothing in readiness, he returned to Britany. In these circumstances the Pretender himself sent to have a vessel got ready for him at Dunkirk, in which he went to Scotland, leaving Lord Bolingbroke all this while at Paris, to try if by any means some assistance might not be procured, without which all hopes of success were at an end. It was during his negociation upon this miserable proceeding, that he was sent for by Mrs. Trant, (a woman who had for some time before ingratiated herself with the Regent of France, by supplying him with mistresses from England,) to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where she lived with Mademoiselle Chausery, an old superannuated waiting-woman belonging to the regent. By these he was acquainted with the measures they had taken for the service of the Duke of Ormond; although Bolingbroke, who was actual Secretary to the negociation, had never been admitted to a confidence in their secrets. He was therefore, a little surprised at finding such mean agents employed without his privity, and very soon found them utterly unequal to the task. He quickly, therefore, withdrew himself from such wretched auxiliaries, and the Regent himself seemed pleased at his defection.

In the mean time the Pretender set sail from Dunkirk for Scotland; and though Bolingbroke had all along perceived that his cause was hopeless, and his projects ill designed; although he had met with nothing but opposition and disappointment in his service; yet he considered that this of all others was the time he could not be permitted to relax in the cause. He now therefore neglected no means, forgot no argument which his understanding could suggest, in applying to the court of France; but his success was not answerable to his industry. The King of France, not able to furnish the Pretender with money himself, had written some time before his death to his grandson the King of Spain, and had obtained from him a promise of forty thousand crowns. A small part of this sum had been received by the Queen's Treasurer at St. Germains, and had been sent to Scotland, or employed to defray the expenses which were daily making on the coast; at the same time Bolingbroke pressed the Spanish Ambassador at Paris, and solicited the minister at the court of Spain. He took care to have a number of officers picked out of the Irish troops which serve in France, gave them their routes, and sent a ship to receive and transport them to Scotland. Still, however, the money came in so slowly, and in such trifling sums, that it turned to little account; and the officers were on their way to the Pretender. At the same time he formed a design of engaging French Privateers in the expedition, that were to have carried whatever should be necessary to send to any part of Britain in their first voyage, and then to cruize under the Pretender's commission. He had actually agreed for some, and had it in his power to have made the same bargain with others: Sweden on the one side, and Scotland on the other, could have afforded them retreats; and if the war had been kept

up in any part of the mountains, this armament would have been of the utmost advantage. But all his projects and negociations failed by the Pretender's precipitate return, who was not above six weeks in his expedition, and flew out of Scotland even before all had been tried in his defence.

The expedition being in this manner totally defeated, Bolingbroke now began to think that it was his duty as well as his interest to save the poor remains of the disappointed party. He never had any great opinion of the Pretender's success before he set off; but when this adventurer had taken the last step which it was in his power to make, our secretary then resolved to suffer neither him, nor the Scotch, to be any longer bubbles of their own credulity, and of the scandalous artifices of the French Court. In a conversation he had with the Marshal De Huxelles, he took occasion to declare, that he would not be the instrument of amusing the Scotch; and since he was able to do them no other service, he would at least inform them of what little dependence they might place upon assistance from France. He added, that he would send them vessels, which with those already on the coast of Scotland, might serve to bring off the Pretender, the Earl of Mar, and as many others as possible. The Marshal approved his resolution, and advised him to execute it as the only thing which was left to do; but in the mean time the Pretender landed at Graveline, and gave orders to stop all vessels bound on his account to Scotland; and Bolingbroke saw him the morning after his arrival at St. Germains, and he received him with open arms.

As it was the Secretary's business, as soon as Bolingbroke heard of his return, he went to acquaint the French court with it; when it was recommended to him to advise the Pretender to proceed to Bar with

all possible diligence; and in this measure Bolingbroke entirely concurred. But the Pretender himself was in no such haste; he had a mind to stay some time at St. Germains, and in the neighbourhood of Paris, and to have a private meeting with the Regent: he accordingly sent Bolingbroke to solicit this meeting, who exerted all his influence in the negociation. He wrote and spoke to the Marshal De Huxelles, who answered him by word of mouth and by letters, refusing him by both, and assuring him, that the Regent said the things which were asked were puerilities, and swore he would not see him. The Secretary, no ways displeased with his ill success, returned with this answer to his master, who acquiesced in this determination, and declared he would instantly set out for Lorrain, at the same time assuring Bolingbroke of his firm reliance on his integrity.

However, the Pretender, instead of taking post for Lorrain, as he had promised, went to a little house in the Bois de Boulogne, where his female ministers resided, and there continued for several days, seeing the Spanish and Swedish Ministers, and even the Regent himself. It might have been in these interviews, that he was set against his new secretary, and taught to believe that he had been remiss in his duty, and false to his trust: be this as it will, a few days after, the Duke of Ormond came to see Bolingbroke, and having first prepared him for the surprise, put into his hands a note directed to the Duke, and a little scrip of paper directed to the secretary; they were both in the Pretender's hand-writing, and dated as if written by him on his way to Lorrain; but in this Bolingbroke was not to be deceived, who knew the place of his present residence. In one of these papers the Pretender declared that he had no farther occasion for the secretary's service; and the other was

an order to him to give up the papers in his office; all which, he observes, might have been contained in a letter-case of a moderate size. He gave the Duke the seals and some papers, which he could readily come at; but for some others, in which there were several insinuations under the Pretender's own hand, reflecting upon the duke himself, these he took care to convey by a safe hand, since it would have been very improper that the Duke should have seen them. As he thus gave up without scruple all the papers which remained in his hands, because he was determined never to make use of them, so he declares he took a secret pride in never asking for those of his own, which were in the Pretender's hands; contenting himself with making the Duke understand, how little need there was to get rid of a man in this manner, who only wanted an opportunity to get rid of the Pretender and his cause. In fact, if we survey the measures taken on the one side, and the abilities of the man on the other, it will not appear any way wonderful, that he should be disgusted with a party, who had neither principle to give a foundation to their hopes, union to advance them, nor abilities to put them in motion.

Bolingbroke being thus dismissed from the Pretender's service, supposed that he had got rid of the trouble and the ignominy of so mean an employment at the same time, but he was mistaken: he was no sooner rejected from the office, than articles of impeachment were preferred against him, in the same manner as he had before been impeached in England, though not with such effectual injury to his person and fortune. The articles of his impeachment by the Pretender, were branched out into seven heads, in which he was accused of treachery, incapacity, and neglect. The first was, that he was never to be

found by those who came to him about business; and if by chance or stratagem they got hold of him, he affected being in a hurry, and by putting them off to another time, still avoided giving them any answer. The second was, that the Earl of Mar complained by six different messengers at different times, before the Chevalier came from Dunkirk, of his being in want of arms and ammunition, and prayed a speedy relief; and though the things demanded were in my lord's power, there was not so much as one pound of powder in any of the ships, which by his lordship's directions parted from France. Thirdly, the pretender himself, after his arrival, sent General Hamilton to inform him, that his want of arms and ammunition was such, that he should be obliged to leave Scotland, unless he received speedy relief: yet Lord Bolingbroke amused Mr. Hamilton twelve days together, and did not introduce him to any of the French Ministers, though he was referred to them for a particular account of affairs; or so much as communicated his letters to the Queen, or any body else. Fourthly, the Count de Castel Blanco, had for several months at Havre a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition, and did daily ask his lordship's orders how to dispose of them, but never got any instructions. Fifthly, the Pretender's friends at the French Court, had for some time past no very good opinion of his lordship's integrity, and a very bad one of his discretion. Sixthly, at a time when many merchants in France would have carried privately any quantity of arms and ammunition into Scotland, his lordship desired a public order for the embarkation, which being a thing not to be granted, is said to have been done in order to urge a denial. Lastly, the Pretender wrote to his lordship by every occasion after his arrival in Scotland; and

though there were many opportunities of writing in return, yet from the time he landed there, to the day he left it, he never received any letter from his lordship. Such were the articles, by a very extraordinary reverse of fortune, preferred against lord Bolingbroke, in less than a year after, similar articles were drawn up against him by the opposite party at home. It is not easy to find out what he could have done thus to disoblige all sides; but he had learned by this time to make out happiness from the consciousness of his own designs, and to consider all the rest of mankind as uniting in a faction to oppress virtue.

But though it was mortifying to be thus rejected on both sides, yet he was not remiss in vindicating himself from all. Against these articles of impeachment, therefore, he drew up an elaborate answer, in which he vindicates himself with great plausibility. He had long, as he asserts, wished to leave the Pretender's service, but was entirely at a loss how to conduct himself in so difficult a resignation; but at length, says he, the Pretender and his council disposed of things better for me, than I could have done for myself. I had resolved, on his return from Scotland, to follow him till his residence should be fixed somewhere; after which, having served the tories in this, which I looked upon as their last struggle for power, and having continued to act in the Pretender's affairs till the end of the term, for which I embarked with him, I should have esteemed myself to be at liberty, and should, in the civilest manner I was able, have taken my leave of him. Had we parted thus, I should have remained in a very strange situation all the rest of my life; on one side he would have thought that he had a right on any future occasion to call me out of my retreat, the tories would probably have thought the same thing, my resolution

was taken to refuse them both, and I foresaw that both would condemn me: on the other side, the consideration of his having kept measures with me, joined to that of having once openly declared for him, would have created a point of honour, by which I should have been tied down, not only from ever engaging against him, but also from making my peace at home. The Pretender cut this Gordian knot asunder at one blow; he broke the links of that chain which former engagements had fastened on me, and gave me a right to esteem myself as free from all obligations of keeping measures with him, as I should have continued if I had never engaged in his interest.

It is not to be supposed that one so very delicate to preserve his honour, would previously have basely betrayed his employer: a man, conscious of acting so infamous a part, would have undertaken no defence, but let the accusations, which could not materially affect him, blow over, and wait for the calm that was to succeed in tranquillity. He appeals to all the ministers with whom he transacted business, for the integrity of his proceedings at that juncture; and had he been really guilty, when he opposed the ministry here after his return, they would not have failed to brand and detect his duplicity. The truth is, that he perhaps was the most disinterested minister at that time in the Pretender's court; as he had spent great sums of his own money in his service, and never would be obliged to him for a farthing, in which case he believes that he was single. His integrity is much less impeachable on this occasion than his ambition; for all the steps he took may be fairly ascribed to his displeasure at having the Duke of Ormond and the Earl of Mar treated more confidentially than himself. It was his aim always to be foremost in every

administration, and he could not bear to act as a subaltern in so paltry a court as that of the Pretender.

At all periods of his exile he still looked towards home with secret regret; and had even taken every opportunity to apply to those in power, either to soften his prosecutions, or lessen the number of his enemies at home. In accepting his office under the Pretender he made it a condition to be at liberty to quit the post whenever he should think proper; and being now disgracefully dismissed, he turned his mind entirely towards making his peace in England, and employing all the unfortunate experience he had acquired to undeceive his tory friends, and to promote the union and quiet of his native country. It was not a little favourable to his hopes, that about this time, though unknown to him, the Earl of Stair, Ambassador to the French court, had received full power to treat with him whilst he was engaged with the Pretender; but yet had never made him any proposals, which might be considered as the grossest outrage. But when the breach with the Pretender was universally known, the earl sent one Monsieur Saludin, a gentleman of Geneva, to Lord Bolingbroke, to communicate to him his Majesty King George's favourable disposition to grant him a pardon, and his own earnest desire to serve him as far as he was able. This was an offer, by much too advantageous for Bolingbroke in his wretched circumstances to refuse; he embraced it, as became him to do, with all possible sense of the king's goodness, and of the ambassador's friendship. They had frequent conferences shortly after, upon the subject. The turn which the English ministry gave the matter, was to enter into a treaty to reverse his attainder, and to stipulate the conditions on which this act of grace should be granted him; but this method of negocia-

tion he would by no means submit to; the notion of a treaty shocked him, and he resolved never to be restored, rather than go that way to work. Accordingly he opened himself without any reserve to Lord Stair, and told him that he looked upon himself obliged in honour and conscience to undeceive his friends in England, both as to the state of foreign affairs, as to the management of the Jacobite interest abroad, and as to the characters of the persons; in every one of which points he knew them to be most grossly and most dangerously deluded. He observed that the treatment he had received from the Pretender and his adherents, would justify him to the world in doing this; that if he remained in exile all his life, he might be assured that he would never have more to do with the Jacobite cause; and that if he were restored, he would give it an effectual blow, in making that apology which the Pretender had put him under a necessity of making; that in doing this he flattered himself that he should contribute something towards the establishment of the King's government, and to the union of his subjects. He added, that if the court thought him sincere in those professions, a treaty with him was unnecessary; and if they did not believe so, then a treaty would be dangerous to him. The Earl of Stair, who has also confirmed this account of Lord Bolingbroke's, in a letter to Mr. Craggs, readily came into his sentiments on this head, and soon after the King approved it upon their representations: he accordingly received a promise of pardon from George I. who, on the 2d of July, 1716, created his father Baron of Battersea, in the county of Surrey, and Viscount St. John. This seemed preparatory to his own restoration; and instead of prosecuting any farther ambitious schemes against the government, he rather began to turn his mind to philosophy; and since he

could not gratify his ambition to its full extent, he endeavoured to learn the art of despising it. The variety of distressful events that had hitherto attended all his struggles, at last had thrown him into a state of reflection, and this produced, by way of relief, a consolatio philosophica, which he wrote the same year, under the title of Reflections upon Exile. In this piece, in which he professes to imitate the manner of Seneca, he with some wit draws his own picture, and represents himself as suffering persecution, for having served his country with abilities and integrity. A state of exile thus incurred, he very justly shows to be rather honourable than distressful; and, indeed, there are few men who will deny, that the company of strangers to virtue, is better than the company of enemies to it. Besides this philosophical tract, he also wrote this year several letters, in answer to the charges laid upon him by the Pretender and his adherents; and the following year he drew up a vindication of his whole conduct with respect to the tories, in the form of a letter to Sir William Windham.

Nor was he so entirely devoted to the fatigues of business, but that he gave pleasure a share in his pursuits. He had never much agreed with the Lady he first married, and after a short cohabitation they separated and lived ever after asunder. She, therefore, remained in England upon his going into exile, and by proper application to the throne, was allowed a sufficient maintenance to support her with becoming dignity: however, she did not long survive his first disgrace: and upon his becoming a widower, he began to think of trying his fortune once more, in a state which was at first so unfavourable. For this purpose he cast his eye on the widow of the Marquis of Villette, and niece to the famous Madam Maintenon; a young Lady of great merit and understanding, pos-

sessed of a very large fortune, but incumbered with a long and troublesome law-suit. In the company of this very sensible woman he passed his time in France, sometimes in the country, and sometimes at the capital, till the year 1723, in which, after the breaking up of the Parliament, his Majesty was pleased to grant him a pardon as to his personal safety, but as yet neither restoring him to his family inheritance, his title, nor a seat in Parliament.

To obtain this favour had been the governing principle of his politics for some years before; and upon the first notice of his good fortune, he prepared to return to his native country, where, however, his dearest connexions were either dead, or declared themselves suspicious of his former conduct in support of their party. It is observable that Bishop Atterbury, who was banished at this time, for a supposed treasonable correspondence in favour of the tories, was set on shore at Calais, just when Lord Bolingbroke arrived there on his return to England. So extraordinary a reverse of fortune could not fail of strongly affecting that good prelate, who observed with some emotion, that he perceived himself to be exchanged: he presently left it to his auditors to imagine, whether his country were the loser or the gainer by such an exchange.

Lord Bolingbroke, upon his return to his native country, began to make very vigorous applications for farther favours from the crown; his pardon, without the means of support, was but an empty, or perhaps it might be called a distressful act of kindness, as it brought him back among his former friends, in a state of inferiority his pride could not endure. However, his applications were soon after successful, for in about two years after his return, he obtained an act of Parliament to restore him to his family inheritance,

which amounted to nearly three thousand pounds a year. He was also enabled by the same to possess any purchase he should make of any other estate in the kingdom; and he accordingly pitched upon a seat of Lord Tankerville's, at Dawley, near Uxbridge in Middlesex, where he settled with his Lady, and laid himself out to enjoy the rural pleasures in perfection, since the more glorious ones of ambition were denied him. With this resolution he began to improve his new purchase in a very peculiar style, giving it all the air of a country farm, and adorning even his hall with all the implements of husbandry. We have a sketch of his way of living in this retreat in a letter of Pope's to Swift, who omits no opportunity of representing his lordship in the most amiable points of view. This letter is dated from Dawley, the country-farm above-mentioned, and begins thus, "I now hold the pen for "my Lord Bolingbroke, who is reading your letter "between two hay-cocks; but his attention is some-"what diverted, by casting his eyes on the clouds, not "in the admiration of what you say, but for fear of a "shower. He is pleased with your placing him in "the triumvirate between yourself and me; though "he says he doubts he shall fare like Lepidus, while "one of us runs away with all the power, like Augus-"tus, and another with all the pleasure, like Anthony. "It is upon a foresight of this, that he has fitted up "his farm, and you will agree that this scheme of re-"treat is not founded upon weak appearances. Upon "his return from Bath, he finds all peccant humours "are purged out of him; and his great temperance "and economy are so signal, that the first is fit for my "constitution, and the latter would enable you to lay "up so much money as to buy a bishopric in England. "As to the return of his health and vigour, were you "here, you might inquire of his hay-makers; but as

" to his temperance, I can answer that for one whole " day we have had nothing for dinner but mutton " broth, beans and bacon, and a barn door fowl. Now " his lordship is run after his cart, I have a moment " left to myself to tell you, that I overheard him yes- " terday agree with a painter for two hundred pounds, " to paint his country-hall with rakes, spades, prongs, " &c. and other ornaments, merely to countenance his " calling this place a farm." What Pope here says of his engagements with a painter was shortly after executed; the hall was painted accordingly in black crayons only, so that at first view it brought to mind the figures often seen scratched with charcoal, or the smoke of a candle, upon the kitchen walls of farm-houses. The whole, however, produced a most striking effect, and over the door at the entrance into it was this motto: *satis beatus ruris honoribus.* His lordship seemed to be extremely happy in this pursuit of moral tranquillity, and in the exultation of his heart could not fail of communicating his satisfactions to his friend Swift. I am in my own farm, says he, and here I shoot strong and tenacious roots: I have caught hold of the earth, to use a gardener's phrase, and neither my enemies nor my friends will find it an easy matter to transplant me again.

There is not, perhaps, a stronger instance in the world than his lordship, that an ambitious mind can never be fairly subdued, but will still seek for those gratifications which retirement can never supply. All this time he was mistaken in his passion for solitude, and supposed that to be the child of philosophy, which was only the effect of spleen: it was in vain that he attempted to take root in the shade of obscurity; he was originally bred in the glare of public occupation, and he secretly once more wished for transplantation. He was only a titular lord, he

had not been thoroughly restored; and, as he was excluded from a seat in the House of Peers, he burned with impatience to play a part in that conspicuous theatre. Impelled by this desire, he could no longer be restrained in obscurity, but once more entered into the bustle of public business, and disavowing all obligations to the minister, he embarked in the opposition against him, in which he had several powerful coadjutors: but previously he had taken care to prefer a petition to the House of Commons, desiring to be reinstated in his former emoluments and capacities. This petition at first occasioned very warm debates; Walpole, who pretended to espouse his cause, alleged, that it was very right to admit him to his inheritance; and when Lord William Pawlet moved for a clause to disqualify him from sitting in either house, Walpole rejected the motion, secretly satisfied with a resolution which had been settled in the cabinet, that he should never more be admitted into any share of power. To this artful method of evading his pretensions, Bolingbroke was no stranger; and he was now resolved to shake that power which thus endeavoured to obstruct the increase of his own: taking, therefore, his part in the opposition with Pulteney, while the latter engaged to manage the House of Commons, Bolingbroke undertook to enlighten the people: accordingly he soon distinguished himself by a multitude of pieces, written during the latter part of George the First's reign, and likewise the beginning of that which succeeded. These were conceived with great vigour and boldness; and now, once more engaged in the service of his country, though disarmed, gagged, and almost bound, as he declared himself to be, yet he resolved not to abandon his cause, as long as he could depend on the firmness and integrity of those coadjutors, who

did not labour under the same disadvantages with himself. His letters in a paper called the Craftsman, were particularly distinguished in this political contest; and though several of the most expert politicians of the times joined in this paper, his essays were peculiarly relished by the public. However, it is the fate of things written to an occasion, seldom to survive that occasion; the Craftsman, though written with great spirit and sharpness, is now almost forgotten, although when it was published as a weekly paper, it sold much more rapidly than even the Spectator. Beside this work, he published several other separate pamphlets, which were afterwards re-printed in the second edition of his works, and which were very popular in their day

This political warfare continued for ten years, during which time he laboured with great strength and perseverance, and drew up such a system of politics, as some have supposed to be the most complete now existing. But, as upon all other occasions, he had the mortification once more to see those friends desert him, upon whose assistance he most firmly relied, and all that web of fine spun speculation actually destroyed at once by the ignorance of some, and the perfidy of others. He then declared that he was perfectly cured of his patriotic phrensy; he fell out not only with Pulteney for his selfish views, but with his old friends the tories, for abandoning their cause as desperate, averring that the faint and unsteady exercise of parts on one side, was a crime but one degree inferior to the iniquitous misapplication of them on the other. But he could not take leave of a controversy, in which he had been so many years engaged, without giving a parting blow, in which he seemed to summon up all his vigour at once, and where, as the poet says,

Animam in vulnere posuit.

This inimitable piece is intituled, " A Dissertation on Parties," and of all his masterly pieces, it is in general esteemed the best.

Having finished this, which was received with the utmost avidity, he resolved to take leave not only of his enemies and friends, but even of his country ; and in this resolution, in the year 1736, he once more retired to France, where he looked to his native country with a mixture of anger and pity, and upon his former professing friends, with a share of contempt and indignation. I expect little, says he, from the principal actors that tread the stage at present. They are divided not so much as it seemed, and as they would have it believed, about measures. The true division is about their different ends. Whilst the minister was not hard pushed, nor the prospect of succeeding to him near, they appeared to have but one end, the reformation of the government. The destruction of the minister was pursued only as a preliminary, but of essential and indisputable necessity, to that end: but when his destruction seemed to approach, the object of his succession interposed to the sight of many, and the reformation of the government was no longer their point of view. They had divided the skin, at least in their thought, before they had taken the beast. The common fear of hastening his downfall for others, made them all faint in the chace. It was this, and this alone, that saved him, and put off his evil day.

Such were his cooler reflections, after he had laid down his political pen, to employ it in a manner that was much more agreeable to his usual professions, and his approaching age. He had long employed

the few hours he could spare, on subjects of a more general and important nature to the interests of mankind; but as he was frequently interrupted by the alarms of party, he made no great proficiency in his design. Still, however, he kept it in view, and he makes frequent mention in his letters to Swift, of his intentions to give metaphysics a new and useful turn. I know, says he, in one of these, how little regard you pay to writings of this kind: but I imagine, that if you can like any, it must be those that strip metaphysics of all their bombast, keep within the sight of every well constituted eye, and never bewilder themselves, whilst they pretend to guide the reason of others.

Having now arrived at the sixtieth year of his age, and being blessed with a very competent share of fortune, he returned into France, far from the noise and hurry of party; for his seat at Dawley was too near to devote the rest of his life to retirement and study. Upon his going to that country, as it was generally known that disdain, vexation, and disappointment had driven him there, many of his friends as well as his enemies supposed, that he was once again gone over to the Pretender. Among the number who entertained this suspicion was Swift, whom Pope in one of his letters very roundly chides for harbouring such an unjust opinion. "You should be cautious," says he, "of censuring any motion or action of Lord Boling-"broke, because you hear it only from a shallow, en-"vious, and malicious reporter. What you writ to "me about him, I find, to my great scandal, repeated "in one of yours to another. Whatever you might "hint to me, was this for the profane? The thing, if "true, should be concealed; but it is, I assure you, "absolutely untrue in every circumstance. He has "fixed in a very agreeable retirement, near Fontain-

" bleau, and makes it his whole business *vacare lit-*
" *teris.*"

This reproof from Pope was not more friendly than it was true ; Lord Bolingbroke was too well acquainted with the forlorn state of that party, and the folly of its conductors, once more to embark in their desperate concerns. He now saw that he had gone as far towards reinstating himself in the full possession of his former honours, as the mere dint of parts and application could go, and was at length experimentally convinced, that the decree was absolutely irreversible, and the door of the House of Lords finally shut against him. He therefore, at Pope's suggestion, retired merely to be at leisure from the broils of opposition, for the calmer pleasures of philosophy. Thus the decline of his life, though less brilliant, became more amiable, and even his happiness was improved by age, which had rendered his passions more moderate, and his wishes more attainable.

But he was far from suffering, even in solitude, his hours to glide away in torpid inactivity. That c tive, restless disposition still continued to actuate his pursuits ; and having lost the season for gaining power over his contemporaries, he was now resolved upon acquiring fame from posterity. He had not been long in his retreat near Fontainbleau, when he began a course of letters on the study and use of history, for the use of a young nobleman. In these he does not follow the methods of St. Real and others who have treated on this subject, who make history the great fountain of all knowledge ; he very wisely confines its benefits, and supposes them rather to consist in deducing general maxims from particular facts, than in illustrating maxims by the application of historical passages. In mentioning ecclesiastical history, he gives his opinion very freely upon the sub-

ject of the divine original of the sacred books, which he supposes to have no such foundation. This new system of thinking, which he had always propagated in conversation, and which he now began to adopt in his more laboured compositions, seemed no way supported either by his acuteness or his learning. He began to reflect seriously on these subjects too late in life, and to suppose those objections very new and unanswerable, which had been already confuted by thousands. "Lord Bolingbroke," says Pope, in one of his letters, "is above trifling, when he writes of any thing in this world, he is more than mortal. If ever he trifles, it must be when he turns divine."

In the mean time, as it was evident that a man of his active ambition, in choosing retirement when no longer able to lead in public, must be liable to ridicule in resuming a resigned philosophical air: in order to obviate the censure, he addressed a letter to Lord Bathurst, upon the true use of retirement and study; in which he shows himself still able and willing to undertake the cause of his country, whenever its distresses should require his exertion. I have, says he, renounced neither my country, nor my friends; and by friends I mean all those, and those alone, who are such to their country. In their prosperity they shall never hear of me; in their distress always. In that retreat, wherein the remainder of my days shall be spent, I may be of some use to them, since even thence I may advise, exhort, and warn them. Bent upon this pursuit only, and having now exchanged the gay statesman for the grave philosopher, he shone forth with distinguished lustre. His conversation took a different turn from what had been usual with him; and, as we are assured by Lord Orrery, who knew him, it united the wisdom of Socrates, the dignity and ease of Pliny, and the wit of Horace.

Yet still amid his resolutions to turn himself from politics, and to give himself up entirely to the calls of philosophy, he could not resist embarking once more in the debates of his country; and coming back from France, settled at Battersea, an old seat which was his father's, and had been long in the possession of the family. He supposed he saw an impending calamity, and though it was not in his power to remove, he thought it his duty to retard its fall. To redeem or save the nation from perdition, he thought impossible, since national corruptions were to be purged by national calamities; but he was resolved to lend his feeble assistance, to stem the torrent that was pouring in. With this spirit he wrote that excellent piece, which is intituled, "The Idea of a Patriot King;" in which he describes a monarch, uninfluenced by party, leaning to the suggestions neither of whigs nor tories, but equally the friend and the father of all. Some time after, in the year 1749, after the conclusion of the peace two years before, the measures taken by the administration seemed not to have been repugnant to his notions of political prudence for that juncture; in that year he wrote his last production, containing reflections on the then state of the nation, principally with regard to her taxes and debts, and on the causes and consequences of them. This undertaking was left unfinished, for death snatched the pen from the hand of the writer.

Having passed the latter part of his life in dignity and splendour, his rational faculties improved by reflection, and his ambition kept under by disappointment, his whole aim seemed to have been to leave the stage of life, on which he had acted such various parts, with applause. He had long wished to fetch his last breath at Battersea, the place where he was born; and fortune, that had through life seemed to traverse all his aims, at last indulged him in this. He had long

been troubled with a cancer in his cheek, by which excruciating disease he died on the verge of fourscore years of age. He was consonant with himself to the last, and those principles which he had all along avowed, he confirmed with his dying breath, having given orders that none of the clergy should be permitted to trouble him in his latest moments.

His body was interred in Battersea church with those of his ancestors; and a marble monument erected to his memory, with the following excellent inscription.

Here lies
HENRY St. JOHN,
In the Reign of Queen Anne
Secretary of War, Secretary of State,
and Viscount Bolingbroke:
In the Days of King George I. and King
George II.
Something more and better.
His Attachment to Queen Anne
Exposed him to a long and severe Persecution;
He bore it with firmness of Mind;
He passed the latter Part of his Time at home,
The enemy of no national Party;
The friend of no Faction.
Distinguished (under the Cloud of a Proscription,
Which had not been entirely taken off,)
By Zeal to maintain the Liberty,
And to restore the ancient Prosperity,
Of Great-Britain.
He Died the 12th of December, 1751,
Aged 79.

In this manner lived and died Lord Bolingbroke; ever active, never depressed, ever pursuing fortune, and as constantly disappointed by her. In whatever

light we view his character, we shall find him an object rather properer for our wonder, than our imitation, more to be feared than esteemed, and gaining our admiration without our love. His ambition ever aimed at the summit of power, and nothing seemed capable of satisfying his immoderate desires, but the liberty of governing all things without a rival. With as much ambition, as great abilities, and more acquired knowledge than Cæsar, he wanted only his courage to be as successful; but the schemes his head dictated, his heart often refused to execute; and he lost the ability to perform, just when the great occasion called for all his efforts to engage.

The same ambition that prompted him to be a politician, actuated him as a philosopher. His aims were equally great and extensive in both capacities: unwilling to submit to any in the one, or any authority in the other, he entered the fields of science with a thorough contempt of all that had been established before him, and seemed willing to think every thing wrong, that he might show his faculty in the reformation. It might have been better for his quiet as a man, if he had been content to act a subordinate character in the state; and it had certainly been better for his memory as a writer, if he had aimed at doing less than he attempted. Wisdom in morals, like every other art or science, is an accumulation that numbers have contributed to increase; and it is not for one single man to pretend, that he can add more to the heap, than the thousands that have gone before him. Such innovations more frequently retard, than promote knowledge; their maxims are more agreeable to the reader, by having the gloss of novelty to recommend them, than those which are trite, only because they are true. Such men are therefore followed at first with avidity, nor is it till some time that their disciples begin to

find their error. They often, though too late, perceive that they have been following a speculative inquiry, while they have been leaving a practical good; and while they have been practising the arts of doubting, they have been losing all firmness of principle, which might tend to establish the rectitude of their private conduct. As a moralist, therefore, Lord Bolingbroke, by having endeavoured at too much, seems to have done nothing: but as a political writer, few can equal and none can exceed him. As he was a practical politician, his writings are less filled with those speculative illusions, which are the result of solitude and seclusion. He wrote them with a certainty of their being opposed, sifted, examined, and reviled; he, therefore, took care to build them up of such materials, as could not be easily overthrown; they prevailed at the times in which they were written, they still continue to the admiration of the present age, and will probably last for ever.

POEMS,

BY

Dr. Oliver Goldsmith.

A PROLOGUE,

WRITTEN AND SPOKEN BY

THE POET LABERIUS,

A Roman Knight, whom Cæsar forced upon the Stage.

PRESERVED BY MACROBIUS*.

WHAT! no way left to shun th' inglorious stage,
And save from infamy my sinking age!
Scarce half-alive, oppress'd with many a year,
What in the name of dotage drives me here?
A time there was, when glory was my guide,
Nor force nor fraud could turn my steps aside;
Unaw'd by power, and unappall'd by fear,
With honest thrift I held my honour dear:
But this vile hour disperses all my store,
And all my hoard of honour is no more;
For ah! too partial to my life's decline,
Cæsar persuades, submission must be mine;
Him I obey, whom Heaven itself obeys,
Hopeless of pleasing, yet inclin'd to please.
Here then at once I welcome every shame,
And cancel at threescore a life of fame;
No more my titles shall my children tell,
The old buffoon will fit my name as well;
This day beyond its term my fate extends,
For life is ended when our honour ends.

* This translation was first printed in one of our Author's earliest works, "The Present State of Learning in Europe," 12mo. 1759; but was omitted in the second edition, which appeared in 1774.

THE

DOUBLE TRANSFORMATION.

*A TALE**.

SECLUDED from domestic strife,
Jack Book-worm led a college life;
A fellowship at twenty-five,
Made him the happiest man alive;
He drank his glass, and crack'd his joke,
And freshmen wonder'd as he spoke.

Such pleasures, unallay'd with care,
Could any accident impair?
Could Cupid's shaft at length transfix
Our swain arrived at thirty-six?
O had the archer ne'er come down
To ravage in a country town!
Or Flavia been content to stop
At triumphs in a Fleet-street shop.
O had her eyes forgot to blaze!
Or Jack had wanted eyes to gaze.
O!——But let exclamation cease,
Her presence banish'd all his peace.
So with decorum all things carry'd;
Miss frown'd, and blush'd, and then was—married.

Need we expose to vulgar sight
The raptures of the bridal night?
Need we intrude on hallow'd ground,
Or draw the curtains clos'd around?

* This and the following Poem were published by Dr. GOLDSMITH in his Volume of Essays, which appeared in 1765.

Let it suffice, that each had charms ;
He clasp'd a goddess in his arms ;
And, though she felt his usage rough,
Yet, in a man, 'twas well enough.

The honey-moon like light'ning flew,
The second brought its transports too.
A third, a fourth, were not amiss,
The fifth was friendship mix'd with bliss :
But, when a twelvemonth pass'd away,
Jack found his goddess made of clay ;
Found half the charms that deck'd her face
Arose from powder, shreds, or lace ;
But still the worst remain'd behind,
That very face had robb'd her mind.

Skill'd in no other arts was she,
But dressing, patching, repartee ;
And, just as humour rose or fell,
By turns a slattern or a belle ;
'Tis true she dress'd with modern grace,
Half naked at a ball or race ;
But when at home, at board or bed,
Five greasy night-caps wrap'd her head.
Could so much beauty condescend
To be a dull domestic friend ?
Could any curtain lectures bring
To decency so fine a thing ?
In short, by night, 'twas fits or fretting ;
By day, 'twas gadding or coquetting.
Fond to be seen, she kept a bevy
Of powder'd coxcombs at her levy ;
The 'squire and captain took their stations,
And twenty other near relations ;
Jack suck'd his pipe, and often broke
A sigh in suffocating smoke ;
While all their hours were pass'd between
Insulting repartee or spleen.

Thus as her faults each day were known,
He thinks her features coarser grown;
He fancies every vice she shows,
Or thins her lip, or points her nose:
Whenever rage or envy rise,
How wide her mouth, how wild her eyes;
He knows not how, but so it is,
Her face is grown a knowing phyz;
And, though her fops are wond'rous civil,
He thinks her ugly as the devil.

Now, to perplex the ravell'd nooze,
As each a different way pursues,
While sullen or loquacious strife
Promis'd to hold them on for life,
That dire disease, whose ruthless power
Withers the beauty's transient flower:
Lo! the small pox, whose horrid glare
Levell'd its terrors at the fair;
And, rifling every youthful grace,
Left but the remnant of a face.

The glass, grown hateful to her sight,
Reflected now a perfect fright:
Each former art she vainly tries
To bring back lustre to her eyes.
In vain she tries her paste and creams,
To smooth her skin or hide its seams;
Her country beaux and city cousins,
Lovers no more, flew off by dozens:
The squire himself was seen to yield,
And ev'n the captain quit the field.

Poor madam now condemn'd to hack
The rest of life with anxious Jack,

Perceiving others fairly flown,
Attempted pleasing him alone,
Jack soon was dazzled to behold
Her present face surpass the old;
With modesty her cheeks are dy'd,
Humility displaces pride;
For taudry finery is seen
A person ever neatly clean;
No more presuming on her sway,
She learns good nature every day;
Serenely gay, and strict in duty,
Jack finds his wife a perfect beauty.

A NEW SIMILE

IN

THE MANNER OF SWIFT.

LONG had I sought in vain to find
A likeness for the scribbling kind;
The modern scribbling kind, who write,
In wit and sense, and nature's spite:
'Till reading, I forgot what day on,
A chapter out of Took's Pantheon,
I think I met with something there,
To suit my purpose to a hair;
But let us not proceed too furious,
First please to turn to God Mercurius!
You'll find him pictur'd at full length
In book the second, page the tenth:

The stress of all my proofs on him I lay,
And now proceed we to our simile.

Imprimus, pray observe his hat,
Wings upon either side—mark that.
Well! what is it from thence we gather?
Why these denote a brain of feather.
A brain of feather! very right,
With wit that's flighty, learning light;
Such as to modern bards decreed;
A just comparison,—proceed.

In the next place, his feet peruse,
Wings grow again from both his shoes;
Design'd, no doubt, their part to bear,
And waft his godship through the air;
And here my simile unites,
For in a modern poet's flights,
I'm sure it may be justly said,
His feet are useful as his head.

Lastly, vouchsafe t'observe his hand,
Fill'd with a snake-incircled wand;
By classic authors term'd caduceus,
And highly fam'd for several uses.
To wit—most wond'rously endu'd,
No poppy water half so good;
For let folks only get a touch,
Its soporific virtues such,
Though ne'er so much awake before,
That quickly they begin to snore.
Add too, what certain writers tell,
With this he drives men's souls to hell

Now to apply, begin we then;
His wand's a modern author's pen;

The serpents round about it twin'd,
Denote him of the reptile kind;
Denote the rage with which he writes,
His frothy slaver, venom'd bites;
An equal semblance still to keep,
Alike too both conduce to sleep,
This difference only as the god
Drove souls to Tart'rus with his rod,
With his goosequill the scribbling elf,
Instead of others, damns himself.

And here my simile almost tript,
Yet grant a word by way of postscript.
Moreover, Merc'ry had a failing:
Well! what of that? out with it—stealing;
In which all modern bards agree,
Being each as great a thief as he:
But ev'n this deity's existence
Shall lend my simile assistance.
Our modern bards! why what a pox
Are they but senseless stones and blocks.

DESCRIPTION

OF AN

AUTHOR'S BED-CHAMBER.

WHERE the Red Lion staring o'er the way,
Invites each passing stranger that can pay;
Where Calvert's butt, and Parson's black champaign,
Regale the drabs and bloods of Drury-lane;
There, in a lonely room, from bailiffs snug,
The muse found Scroggen stretch'd beneath a rug;
A window patch'd with paper, lent a ray,
That dimly show'd the state in which he lay;
The sanded floor that grits beneath the tread;
The humid wall with paltry pictures spread:
The Royal game of goose was there in view,
And the twelve rules the royal martyr drew;
The seasons, fram'd with listing, found a place,
And brave prince William show'd his lamp-black face:
The morn was cold, he views with keen desire
The rusty grate, unconscious of a fire:
With beer and milk arrears, the frieze was scor'd,
And five crack'd tea-cups dress'd the chimney board;
And night-cap deck'd his brows instead of bay,
A cap by night——a stocking all the day!

THE

HERMIT.

A BALLAD.

FIRST PRINTED IN M,DCC,LXV.

THE FOLLOWING LETTER,

ADDRESSED TO THE

Printer of the St. James's Chronicle,

APPEARED IN THAT PAPER,

IN JUNE, M DCC LXVII.

SIR,

AS there is nothing I dislike so much as newspaper controversy, particularly upon trifles, permit me to be as concise as possible in informing a correspondent of yours, that I recommended Blainville's Travels, because I thought the book was a good one; and I think so still. I said, I was told by the bookseller that it was then first published; but in that, it seems, I was misinform'd, and my reading was not extensive enough to set me right.

Another correspondent of yours accuses me of having taken a ballad, I published some time ago, from one * by the ingenious Mr. Percy. I do not think there is any great resemblance between the two pieces in question. If there be any, his Ballad is taken from mine. I read it to Mr. Percy some years ago; and he (as we both considered these things as trifles at best,) told me, with his usual good humour, the next time I saw him, that he had taken my plan to form the fragments of Shakspeare into a Ballad of his own. He then read me his little Cento, if I may so call it, and I highly approved it. Such petty anecdotes as

* The Friar of Orders Gray. "Reliq. of Anc. Poetry." Vol. I. Book 2. No. 18.

these, are scarcely worth printing: and were it not for the busy disposition of some of your correspondents, the public should never have known that he owes me the hint of his Ballad, or that I am obliged to his friendship and learning for communications of a much more important nature.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

Note. On the subject of the preceding letter, the reader is desired to consult "The Life of Dr. Goldsmith," under the year 1765.

THE HERMIT.

A BALLAD.

I.

" TURN, gentle Hermit of the dale,
" And guide my lonely way,
" To where yon taper cheers the vale,
" With hospitable ray.

II.

" For here forlorn and lost I tread,
" With fainting steps and slow;
" Where wilds, immeasurably spread,
" Seem length'ning as I go."

III.

" Forbear, my son," the Hermit cries,
" To tempt the dangerous gloom;
" For yonder faithless phantom flies
" To lure thee to thy doom.

IV.

" Here to the houseless child of want
" My door is open still;
" And though my portion is but scant,
" I give it with good will.

V.

" Then turn to-night, and freely share
" Whate'er my cell bestows;
" My rushy couch and frugal fare,
" My blessing and repose.

VI.

" No flocks that range the valley free,
" To slaughter I condemn;
" Taught by that power that pities me,
" I learn to pity them:

VII.

" But from the mountain's grassy side
" A guiltless feast I bring;
" A scrip with herbs and fruits supply'd,
" And water from the spring.

VIII.

" Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego;
" All earth-born cares are wrong;
" Man wants but little here below,
" Nor wants that little long."

IX.

Soft as the dew from Heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell:
The modest stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

X.

Far in a wilderness obscure
The lonely mansion lay,
A refuge to the neighb'ring poor
And strangers led astray.

XI.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care;
The wicket, op'ning with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

XII.

And now, when busy crowds retire
To take their evening rest,
The Hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his pensive guest:

XIII.

And spread his vegetable store,
And gaily press'd, and smil'd;
And skill'd in legendary lore
The ling'ring hours beguil'd.

XIV.

Around in sympathetic mirth
Its tricks the kitten tries,
The cricket chirrups in the hearth,
The crackling faggot flies.

XV.

But nothing could a charm impart
To soothe the stranger's wo;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

XVI.

His rising cares the Hermit spy'd,
With answ'ring care oppress:
"And whence, unhappy youth," he cry'd,
"The sorrows of thy breast?

XVII.

"From better habitations spurn'd,
"Reluctant dost thou rove?
"Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
"Or unregarded love?

XVIII.

"Alas! the joys that fortune brings,
"Are trifling, and decay;
"And those who prize the paltry things,
"More trifling still are they.

XIX.

" And what is friendship but a name,
" A charm that lulls to sleep;
" A shade that follows wealth or fame,
" But leaves the wretch to weep?

XX.

" And love is still an emptier sound,
" The modern fair-one's jest:
" On earth unseen, or only found
" To warm the turtle's nest.

XXI.

" For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
" And spurn the sex," he said:
But while he spoke, a rising blush
His love-lorn guest betray'd.

XXII.

Surpris'd he sees new beauties rise,
Swift mantling to the view;
Like colours o'er the morning skies,
As bright, as transient too.

XXIII.

The bashful look, the rising breast,
Alternate spread alarms:
The lovely stranger stands confest
A maid in all her charms.

XXIV.

" And ah! forgive a stranger rude,
" A wretch forlorn," she cry'd;
" Whose feet unhallow'd thus intrude
" Where Heav'n and you reside.

XXV.

" But let a maid thy pity share,
" Whom love has taught to stray:
" Who seeks for rest, but finds Despair
" Companion of her way.

XXVI.

" My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
" A wealthy lord was he ;
" And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
" He had but only me.

XXVII.

" To win me from his tender arms
" Unnumber'd suitors came ;
" Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
" And felt, or feign'd a flame.

XXVIII.

" Each hour a mercenary crowd
" With richest proffers strove ;
" Amongst the rest young Edwin bow'd,
" But never talk'd of love.

XXIX.

" In humble simplest habit clad,
" No wealth nor power had he ;
" Wisdom and worth were all he had,
" But these were all to me.

XXX

" And when, beside me in the dale,
" He carol'd lays of love,
" His breath lent fragrance to the gale
" And music to the grove *.

XXXI.

" The blossom opening to the day,
" The dews of Heav'n refin'd
" Could nought of purity display
" To emulate his mind.

* This stanza, never before printed, was communicated by Richard Archdal, Esq. who received it from the Author himself.

XXXII.

" The dew, the blossom on the tree,
" With charms inconstant shine ;
" Their charms were his, but wo to me,
" Their constancy was mine.

XXXIII.

" For still I try'd each fickle art,
" Importunate and vain ;
" And while his passion touch'd my heart,
" I triumph'd in his pain.

XXXIV.

" Till quite dejected with my scorn,
" He left me to my pride ;
" And sought a solitude forlorn,
" In secret, where he dy'd.

XXXV.

" But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
" And well my life shall pay ;
" I'll seek the solitude he sought,
" And stretch me where he lay.

XXXVI.

" And there forlorn despairing hid,
" I'll lay me down and die ;
" 'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
" And so for him will I."

XXXVII.

" Forbid it Heav'n !" the Hermit cry'd,
And clasp'd her to his breast :
The wond'ring fair one turn'd to chide,—
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.

XXXVIII.

" Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
" My charmer turn to see
" Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
" Restor'd to love and thee.

XXXIX.

" Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
" And every care resign:
" And shall we never, never part,
" My life—my all that's mine?

XL.

" No never from this hour to part,
" We'll live and love so true;
" The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
" Shall break thy Edwin's too."

AN ELEGY,

ON THE

DEATH OF A MAD DOG*.

GOOD people all, of every sort,
Give ear unto my song,
And if you find it wond'rous short,
It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man,
Of whom the world might say,
That still a godly race he ran,
Whene'er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had,
To comfort friends and foes;
The naked every day he clad,
When he put on his clothes.

* This, and the following Poem, appeared in the Vicar of Wakefield, which was published in the year 1765.

And in that town a dog was found,
As many dogs there be,
Both mungrel, puppy, whelp, and hound,
And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends,
But when a pique began,
The dog, to gain some private ends,
Went mad and bit the man.

Around from all the neighb'ring streets,
The wond'ring neighbours ran,
And swore the dog had lost his wits,
To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad,
To every christian eye;
And while they swore the dog was mad,
They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
That show'd the rogues they ly'd;
The man recover'd of the bite,
The dog it was that dy'd.

STANZAS
ON WOMAN.

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is to die.

THE GIFT.

TO IRIS,

IN BOW-STREET, COVENT GARDEN.

SAY, cruel Iris, pretty rake,
Dear mercenary beauty,
What annual off'ring shall I make
Expressive of my duty.

My heart, a victim to thine eyes,
Should I at once deliver,
Say, would the angry fair-one prize
The gift who slights the giver?

A bill, a jewel, watch, or toy,
My rivals give—and let 'em.
If gems, or gold, impart a joy,
I'll give them—when I get 'em.

I'll give—but not the full blown rose,
Or rose-bud more in fashion;
Such short-liv'd off'rings but disclose
A transitory passion.

I'll give thee something yet unpaid,
Not less sincere than civil:
I'll give thee—ah! too charming maid,
I'll give thee—to the devil.

EPITAPH

ON

DR. PARNELL.

THIS tomb inscrib'd to gentle PARNELL's name,
May speak our gratitude, but not his fame.
What heart but feels his sweetly moral lay,
That leads to truth through pleasure's flowery way!
Celestial themes confess'd his tuneful aid;
And heaven, that lent him genius, was repaid.
Needless to him the tribute we bestow,
The transitory breath of fame below:
More lasting rapture from his works shall rise,
While converts thank their poet in the skies.

EPILOGUE

TO THE

COMEDY OF THE SISTERS.

WHAT? five long acts—and all to make us wiser!
Our authoress sure has wanted an adviser.
Had she consulted me, she should have made
Her moral play a speaking masquerade;
Warm'd up each bustling scene, and in her rage,
Have emptied all the green room on the stage.
My life on't, this had kept her play from sinking;
Have pleas'd our eyes, and sav'd the pain of thinking.
Well, since she thus has shown her want of skill,
What if I give a masquerade?—I will.

But how? ay, there's the rub! [*pausing*]—I've got my cue:
The world's a masquerade! the masquers, you, you, you. [*To Boxes, Pit, and Gallery.*
Lud! what a group the motley scene discloses!
False wits, false wives, false virgins, and false spouses!
Statesmen with bridles on; and, close beside 'em,
Patriots in party-colour'd suits that ride 'em.
There Hebes, turn'd of fifty, try once more
To raise a flame in Cupids of threescore.
These in their turn, with appetites as keen,
Deserting fifty, fasten on fifteen.
Miss, not yet full fifteen, with fire uncommon,
Flings down her sampler, and takes up the woman;
The little urchin smiles, and spreads her lure,
And tries to kill, ere she's got power to cure:
Thus 'tis with all—their chief and constant care
Is to seem every thing—but what they are.
Yon broad, bold, angry spark, I fix my eye on,
Who seems t'have robb'd his vizor from the lion;
Who frowns, and talks, and swears, with round parade, [*Mimicking.*
Looking, as who should say, dam'me! who's afraid?
Strip but this vizor off, and sure I am
You'll find his lionship a very lamb.
Yon politician, famous in debate,
Perhaps to vulgar eyes, bestrides the state;
Yet, when he deigns his real shape t'assume,
He turns old woman, and bestrides a broom.
Yon patriot, too, who presses on your sight,
And seems to every gazer, all in white,
If with a bribe his candour you attack,
He bows, turns round, and whip—the man in black!
Yon critic, too—but whither do I run?
If I proceed, our bard will be undone!
Well then a truce, since she requests it too:
Do you spare her, and I'll for once spare you.

EPILOGUE,

SPOKEN BY MRS. BULKLEY AND MISS CATLEY.

Enter Mrs. Bulkley, who curtsies very low as beginning to speak. Then enter Miss Catley, who stands full before her, and curtsies to the Audience.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

HOLD Ma'am, your pardon. What's your business here?

Miss CATLEY.

The Epilogue.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

The Epilogue?

Miss CATLEY.

Yes, the Epilogue, my dear.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Sure you mistake, Ma'am. The Epilogue *I* bring it.

Miss CATLEY.

Excuse me, Ma'am. The Author bid *me* sing it.

RECITATIVE.

Ye beaux and belles, that form this splendid ring,
Suspend your conversation while I sing.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Why sure the Girl's beside herself: an Epilogue of singing,
A hopeful end indeed to such a blest beginning.
Besides, a singer in a comic set!
Excuse me, Ma'am, I know the etiquette.

Miss CATLEY.

What if we leave it to the House?

Mrs. BULKLEY.

The House!—Agreed.

Miss CATLEY.

Agreed.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

And she, who's party's largest, shall proceed:
And first I hope, you'll readily agree
I've all the critics and the wits for me.
They, I am sure, will answer my commands:
Ye candid judging few, hold up your hands;
What, no return? I find too late, I fear,
That modern judges seldom enter here.

Miss CATLEY.

I'm for a different set.—Old men, whose trade is
Still to gallant and dangle with the ladies.

RECITATIVE.

Who mump their passion, and who, grimly smiling,
Still thus address the fair with voice beguiling.

AIR.—COTILLON.

Turn, my fairest, turn, if ever
Strephon caught thy ravish'd eye,
Pity take on your swain so clever,
Who without your aid must die.
Yes, I shall die, hu, hu, hu, hu,
Yes, I must die, ho, ho, ho, ho.

Da Capo.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Let all the old pay homage to your merit:
Give me the young, the gay, the men of spirit.
Ye travelled tribe, ye macaroni train
Of French friseurs, and nosegays, justly vain,
Who take a trip to Paris once a year
To dress, and look like awkward Frenchmen here.
Lend me your hands.—O fatal news to tell,
Their hands are only lent to the Heinelle.

Miss CATLEY.

Ay, take your travellers, travellers indeed?
Give me my bonny Scot, that travels from the Tweed

Where are the Cheels? Ah! Ah, I will discern
The smiling looks of each bewitching bairne.
A bonny young lad is my Jockey.

AIR.

I'll sing to amuse you by night and by day,
And be unco merry when you are but gay;
When you with your bagpipes are ready to play,
My voice shall be ready to carol away
With Sandy, and Sawney, and Jockey,
With Sawney, and Jarvie, and Jockey.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Ye Gamesters, who so eager in pursuit,
Make but of all your fortune one *va Toute:*
Ye Jockey tribe whose stock of words are few,
"I hold the odds.—Done, done, with you, with you."
Ye Barristers, so fluent with grimace,
"My Lord—your Lordship misconceives the case."
Doctors, who cough and answer every misfortuner,
"I wish I'd been call'd in a little sooner,"
Assist my cause with hands and voices hearty,
Come end the contest here, and aid my party.

AIR.—BALEINAMONY.

Miss CATLEY.

Ye brave Irish lads, hark away to the crack,
Assist me, I pray, in this woful attack;
For sure I don't wrong you, you seldom are slack,
When the ladies are calling, to blush, and hang back.
For you're always polite and attentive,
Still to amuse us inventive,
And death is your only preventive.
Your hands and your voices for me.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Well, Madam, what if, after all this sparring,
We both agree, like friends, to end our jarring?

Miss CATLEY.

And that our friendship may remain unbroken,
What if we leave the Epilogue unspoken?

Mrs. BULKLEY.

Agreed.

Miss CATLEY.

Agreed.

Mrs. BULKLEY.

And now with late repentance,
Un-epilogued the Poet waits his sentence.
Condemn the stubborn fool who can't submit
To thrive by flattery, though he starves by wit.

[*Exeunt.*

AN EPILOGUE,

INTENDED FOR MRS. BULKLEY.

THERE is a place, so Ariosto sings,
A treasury for lost and missing things:
Lost human wits have places there assign'd them,
And they, who lose their senses, there may find them.
But where's this place, this storehouse of the age?
The Moon, says he:—but I affirm the Stage:
At least in many things, I think, I see
His lunar, and our mimic world agree.
Both shine at night, for but at Foote's alone,
We scarce exhibit till the sun goes down.
Both prone to change, no settled limits fix,
And sure the folks of both are lunatics,
But in this parallel my best pretence is,
That mortals visit both to find their senses.
To this strange spot, Rakes, Macaronies, Cits,
Come thronging to collect their scatter'd wits.

The gay coquette, who ogles all the day,
Comes here at night, and goes a prude away,
Hither the affected city dame advancing,
Who sighs for Operas, and doats on dancing,
Taught by our art her ridicule to pause on,
Quits the *Ballet* and calls for Nancy Dawson.
The Gamester too, whose wits all high or low,
Oft risks his fortune on one desperate throw,
Comes here to saunter, having made his bets,
Finds his lost senses out, and pays his debts.
The Mohawk too—with angry phrases stor'd,
As "Dam'me, Sir," and "Sir, I wear a sword;"
Here lesson'd for a while, and hence retreating,
Goes out, affronts his man, and takes a beating.
Here comes the sons of scandal and of news,
But find no sense—for they had none to lose.
Of all the tribe here wanting an adviser,
Our Author's the least likely to grow wiser;
Has he not seen how you your favour place,
On sentimental Queens and Lords in lace?
Without a star, a coronet, or garter,
How can the piece expect or hope for quarter?
No high-life scenes, no sentiment:—the creature
Still stoops among the low to copy nature.
Yes, he's far gone:—and yet some pity fix
The English laws forbid to punish lunatics *.

* This Epilogue was given in MS. by Dr. Goldsmith to Dr. Percy, (now Bishop of Dromore;) but for what comedy it was intended is not remembered.

THE

HAUNCH OF VENISON,

A

POETICAL EPISTLE,

TO

LORD CLARE.

FIRST PRINTED, IN M,DCC,LXV.

THANKS, my lord, for your venison, for finer or fatter
Never rang'd in a forest, or smok'd in a platter;
The haunch was a picture for painters to study,
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy;
Though my stomach was sharp, I could scarce help regretting,
To spoil such a delicate picture by eating;
I had thoughts, in my chambers, to place it in view,
To be shown to my friends as a piece of virtu;
As in some Irish houses, where things are so so,
One gammon of bacon hangs up for a show:
But, for eating a rasher of what they take pride in,
They'd as soon think of eating the pan it is fry'd in.
But hold—let me pause—don't I hear you pronounce,
This tale of the bacon's a damnable bounce;
Well suppose it a bounce—sure a poet may try,
By a bounce now and then, to get courage to fly.

But, my lord, it's no bounce: I protest in my turn,
It's a truth—and your Lordship may ask Mr. Burn *.

* Lord Clare's nephew.

To go on with my tale—as I gaz'd on the haunch,
I thought of a friend that was trusty and staunch,
So I cut it, and sent it to Reynolds undrest,
To paint it, or eat it, just as he lik'd best,
Of the neck and a breast I had next to dispose;
'Twas a neck and a breast that might rival Monroe's:
But in parting with these I was puzzled again,
With the how, and the who, and the where, and the
when.
There's H—d, and C—y, and H—rth, and H—ff,
I think they love venison—I know they love beef.
There's my countryman Higgins—Oh! let him alone,
For making a blunder, or picking a bone.
But hang it—to poets who seldom can eat,
Your very good mutton's a very good treat;
Such dainties to them their health it might hurt,
It's like sending them ruffles when wanting a shirt.
While thus I debated, in reverie center'd,
An acquaintance, a friend as he call'd himself, enter'd;
An under-bred, fine-spoken fellow was he,
And he smil'd as he look'd at the venison and me.
"What have we got here?—Why this is good eating!
Your own I suppose—or is it in waiting?"
"Why whose should it be?" cried I with a flounce;
"I get these things often—but that was a bounce:
Some lords, my acquaintance, that settle the nation,
Are pleas'd to be kind—but I hate ostentation."

"If that be the case then, cried he very gay,
I'm glad I have taken this house in my way.
To-morrow you take a poor dinner with me;
No words—I insist on't—precisely at *three:*
We'll have Johnson, and Burke, all the wits will be
there;
My acquaintance is slight, or I'd ask my lord Clare.
And, now that I think on't, as I am a sinner!
We wanted this venison to make out a dinner.

What say you—a pasty, it shall, and it must,
And my wife, little Kitty, is famous for crust.
Here, porter—this venison with me to Mile-end;
No stirring—I beg—my dear friend—my dear friend!"
Thus snatching his hat, he brush'd off like the wind,
And the porter and eatables follow'd behind.

Left alone to reflect, having emptied my shelf,
And "nobody with me at sea but myself *;"
Tho' I could not help thinking my gentleman hasty,
Yet Johnson, and Burke, and a good venison pasty,
Were things that I never dislik'd in my life,
Tho' clogg'd with a coxcomb, and Kitty his wife.
So next day in due splendour to make my approach,
I drove to his door in my own hackney-coach.

When come to the place where we all were to dine,
(A chair-lumber'd closet just twelve feet by nine:)
My friend bade me welcome, but struck me quite dumb,
With tidings that Johnson and Burke would not come;
"For I knew it," he cried, "both eternally fail,
The one with his speeches, and t'other with Thrale;
But no matter, I'll warrant we'll make up the party,
With two full as clever, and ten times as hearty.
The one is a Scotchman, the other a Jew,
They both of them merry, and authors like you;
The one writes the Snarler, the other the Scourge;
Some thinks he writes Cinna—he owns to Panurge."
While thus he describ'd them by trade and by name,
They enter'd, and dinner was serv'd as they came.

* See the letters that passed between his Royal Highness Henry, Duke of Cumberland, and Lady Grosvenor—12mo. 1769.

At the top a fried liver and bacon were seen,
At the bottom was tripe, in a swinging tureen;
At the sides there was spinnage and pudding made hot;
In the middle a place where the pasty—was not.
Now, my lord, as for tripe its my utter aversion,
And your bacon I hate like a Turk or a Persian.
So there I sat stuck, like a horse in a pound,
While the bacon and liver went merrily round:
But what vex'd me most was that d——'d Scottish rogue,
With his long-winded speeches, his smiles and his brogue;
And, "madam," quoth he, "may this bit be my poison,
A prettier dinner I never set eyes on;
Pray a slice of your liver, tho' may I be curst,
But I've eat of your tripe, 'till I'm ready to burst."
"The tripe, quoth the Jew, with his chocolate cheek,
I could dine on this tripe seven days in a week:
I like these here dinners so pretty and small;
But your friend there, the doctor, eats nothing at all."
"O—ho! quoth my friend, he'll come on in a trice,
He's keeping a corner for something that's nice:
There's a pasty"—"a pasty! repeated the Jew;
I don't care, if I keep a corner for't too."
"What the de'el, mon, a pasty! re-echo'd the Scot,
Tho' splitting, I'll still keep a corner for that."
"We'll all keep a corner," the lady cry'd out;
"We'll all keep a corner," was echo'd about.
While thus we resolv'd, and the pasty delay'd,
With looks that quite petrified, enter'd the maid;
A visage so sad, and so pale with affright,
Wak'd Priam in drawing his curtains by night.
But we quickly found out, for who could mistake her?
That she came with some terrible news from the baker:

And so it fell out, for that negligent sloven,
Had shut out the pasty on shutting his oven.
Sad Philomel thus—but let similes drop—
And now that I think on't, the story may stop.
To be plain, my good lord, it's but labour misplac'd,
To send such good verses to one of your taste;
You've got an odd something—a kind of discerning—
A relish—a taste—sicken'd over by learning;
At least, it's your temper, as very well known,
That you think very slightly of all that's your own.
So, perhaps, in your habits of thinking amiss,
You may make a mistake, and think slightly of this.

FROM THE ORATORIO
OF
THE CAPTIVITY.

SONG.

THE wretch condemn'd with life to part,
Still, still on hope relies;
And ev'ry pang that rends the heart,
Bids expectation rise.

Hope, like the glimmering taper's light,
Adorns and cheers the way;
And still as darker grows the night,
Emits a brighter ray.

SONG.

O MEMORY! thou fond deceiver,
Still importunate and vain,
To former joys recurring ever,
And turning all the past to pain;

Thou, like the world, the opprest oppressing,
Thy smiles increase the wretch's wo;
And he who wants each other blessing,
In thee must ever find a foe.

THE CLOWN's REPLY.

JOHN TROTT was desir'd by two witty peers,
To tell them the reason why asses had ears;
"An't please you," quoth John, "I'm not given to
"letters,
"Nor dare I pretend to know more than my betters;
"Howe'er from this time I shall ne'er see your graces,
"As I hope to be sav'd! without thinking on asses."

Edinburgh, 1753.

EPITAPH
ON EDWARD PURDON*.

HERE lies poor NED PURDON, from misery freed,
Who long was a bookseller's hack:
He led such a damnable life in this world,—
I don't think he'll wish to come back.

* This gentleman was educated at Trinity College, Dublin; but having wasted his patrimony, he enlisted as a foot soldier. Growing tired of that employment, he obtained his discharge, and became a scribbler in the newspapers. He translated Voltaire's HENRIADE.

AN ELEGY
ON THE GLORY OF HER SEX,
MRS. MARY BLAIZE.

GOOD people all, with one accord,
Lament for madam Blaize,
Who never wanted a good word—
From those who spoke her praise.

The needy seldom pass'd her door,
And always found her kind;
She freely lent to all the poor,—
Who left a pledge behind.

She strove the neighbourhood to please,
With manners wond'rous winning;
And never followed wicked ways,—
Unless when she was sinning.

At church, in silks and satins new,
With hoop of monstrous size;
She never slumber'd in her pew,—
But when she shut her eyes.

Her love was sought, I do aver,
By twenty beaux and more;
The king himself has follow'd her,—
When she has walk'd before.

But now her wealth and finery fled,
Her hangers-on cut short all;
The doctors found when she was dead,—
Her last disorder mortal.

Let us lament in sorrow sore,
For Kent-street well may say,
That had she lived a twelve-month more,—
She had not dy'd to-day.

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY

MR. LEE LEWES,

In the character of Harlequin, at his benefit.

HOLD! Prompter, hold! a word before your nonsense;
I'd speak a word or two to ease my conscience.
My pride forbids it ever should be said,
My heels eclips'd the honours of my head;
That I found humour in a pyeball vest,
Or ever thought that jumping was a jest.
[*Takes off his mask.*
Whence, and what art thou, visionary birth?
Nature disowns, and reason scorns thy mirth,
In thy black aspect every passion sleeps,
The joy that dimples, and the wo that weeps.
How hast thou fill'd the scene with all thy brood,
Of fools pursuing, and of fools pursu'd!
Whose ins and outs no ray of sense discloses,
Whose only plot it is to break our noses;
Whilst from below the trap-door *Dæmons* rise,
And from above the dangling deities;
And shall I mix in this unhallow'd crew?
May rosin'd lightning blast me, if I do!
No—I will act, I'll vindicate the stage:
Shakspeare himself shall feel my tragic rage.
Off! off! vile trappings! a new passion reigns!
The madd'ning monarch revels in my veins.
Oh! for a Richard's voice to catch the theme:
Give me another horse! bind up my wounds!—soft
—'twas but a dream.

Aye, 'twas but a dream, for now there's no retreating,
If I cease Harlequin, I cease from eating.
'Twas thus that Æsop's stag, a creature blameless,
Yet something vain, like one that shall be nameless,
Once on the margin of a fountain stood,
And cavill'd at his image in the flood.
" The deuce confound," he cries, " these drumstick
" shanks,
" They never have my gratitude nor thanks;
" They're perfectly disgraceful! strike me dead!
" But for a head, yes, yes, I have a head.
" How piercing is that eye! how sleek that brow!
" My horns! I'm told horns are the fashion now."
Whilst thus he spoke, astonish'd! to his view,
Near, and more near, the hounds and huntsmen drew.
Hoicks! hark forward! came thundering from be-
hind,
He bounds aloft, outstrips the fleeting wind:
He quits the woods, and tries the beaten ways;
He starts, he pants, he takes the circling maze.
At length his silly head, so priz'd before,
Is taught his former folly to deplore;
Whilst his strong limbs conspire to set him free,
And at one bound, he saves himself, like me.

[*Taking a jump through the stage door.*

STANZAS

ON THE TAKING OF QUEBEC.

AMIDST the clamour of exulting joys,
Which triumph forces from the patriot heart;
Grief dares to mingle her soul-piercing voice,
And quells the raptures which from pleasure start.

O WOLFE, to thee a streaming flood of wo,
Sighing we pay, and think e'en conquest dear;
Quebec in vain shall teach our breast to glow,
Whilst thy sad fate extorts the heart-wrung tear.

Alive the foe thy dreadful vigour fled,
And saw thee fall with joy pronouncing eyes:
Yet they shall know thou conquerest, though dead!
Since from thy tomb a thousand heroes rise.

ON A BEAUTIFUL YOUTH,

Struck blind by Lightning.

SURE 'twas by Providence design'd
Rather in pity than in hate,
That he should be, like Cupid, blind,
To save him from Narcissus' fate.

A SONNET.

WEEPING, murmuring, complaining,
Lost to every gay delight;
Myra, too sincere for feigning,
Fears th' approaching bridal night.

Yet why impair thy bright perfection!
Or dim thy beauty with a tear?
Had Myra follow'd my direction,
She long had wanted cause of fear.

END OF VOL. I.

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